AN

ARGUMENT

FOR

Infants Baptiſme,

Deduced from the

ANALOGY of FAITH,

AND

Harmony of [illegible]ptures.

In Which,

In a Method wholly new, and upon Grou[illegible] not commonly obſerved, bo[illegible] Doctrine (of *Infants Baptiſm*) is fully Aſſerted, and the Objections againſt it, are obviated

By Richard Burthogge, M.D.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

TO THE

Excellent Lady,

THE

Lady *ANNE DRAKE*,

OF

Place *in* Buckland Monachorum, *in the County of* Devon.

Madam,

WHat is done in the following *Letters* in Defence of *Infants Baptiſm*, is ſo juſtly Your

Ladyſhips upon ſo many *Titles*, that to diſown it by Dedicating of *Them* to any Other, or not to own it by not Dedicating of *Them* to Your Ladyſhip, would be as great Injuſtice, as, but for your Intereſt in *Them*, to do the laſt, a Preſumption.

The Firſt of *Them* is a Second Edition of a *Former* ſent my Adverſary; in *which* (as I thought the Return he gave, obliged me to do) I made ſuch Alterations, Additions, and E-

men-

mendations, as might illuminate my Principal Argument; without engaging me in Matters Forraign to it. And to his Rejoynder unto *This* as ſo Enlarged, the *Second* is a *Reply*: and thoſe that follow, are Defences to Both.

My *Argument* is founded on that *Covenant* of *Grace* it pleaſed *God* to make with *Abraham*, and with his *Seed*: In *which*, as he gave Himſelf, and all he hath to *Abraham*, and to his *Seed*; ſo he requires (what is moſt

highly reaſonable he ſhould) that *Abraham*, and all he owned, and that *Abraham*'s Seed, and all they own, ſhould be His: And that in Token of being *ſo*, both *Abraham* himſelf ſhou'd *keep the Covenant*, by wearing the Initiating Sign *thereof* himſelf, and putting it on all *His*, (that was capable of it) and alſo, that his Seed ſhould keep it in like manner. Certain it is, the *Seed* of *Abraham* is as much obliged to keep the Covenant, as *Abraham* himſelf; [*Thou*

ſhalt

ſhalt keep my Covenant there-fore, Thou and thy Seed af-ter thee in their Generations.] And I have proved the Be-lieving *Gentiles* to be *That Seed*; ſo that, though the *Gentiles* muſt believe, to be-come the Seed of *Abraham*; yet, on becoming his Seed, they come alſo under the Obligation to obſerve the Covenant, as much as *Abra-ham* himſelf.

I have alſo proved, That the Covenant of *Abraham*, is the firſt Solemn Formal Covenant of Grace, for E-

ternal Life and Salvation, through our Lord *Chriſt*, that, in Account and Reckoning of the Scriptures, it pleaſed *God* to make with Man; and conſequently, that the Firſt Separate and Inſtituted Church, was then appointed in the Family of *Abraham*: So that, from the very *Beginning* that it pleaſed *God* to Eſtabliſh and Ratifie his *Covenant*, and to Conſtitute and Frame a *Church*, as He did Ordain the Signing of the *Adult*; ſo he did the Signing

of

of *Infants*: *Therein* laying the Foundations of the Common-wealth of *Iſrael* in the Memberſhip of Children, as well as in that of the Parents. *God* never Conſtituted any *Formal* Church, until he had made a *Formal* Covenant; and the Sign of the Covenant, is the Rite of Initiation into the *Church*: None comes into the Latter, but by the Former; and *Baptiſm* is ſuch a Sign.

I do not ſay, That *Baptiſm* is come in the Place of

Cir-

Circumciſion; I know too well the uſe is made of that Expreſſion, though in it ſelf, and as meant, it be moſt Innocent and Inoffenſive: But I ſay, It cannot be denyed, that as Circumciſion was the Initiating Rite and Sign before the Coming of *Chriſt*; ſo (that) *Baptiſm* is after it: And that, *Nom*, to dedicate and give a Perſon to *God* viſibly and ſolemnly, is, by that Sign and Rite to Matriculate him; that is, to Enter and Initiate him into the *Church*.

And

And now, *Madam*, Is not the *Baptiſm* of *Infants*, in the Notion I have of it, a thing of High and Spiritual Nature, and of great Significancy? When it is not *meerly* Baby-ſprinkling, and Sealing to a Blank, as ſome do phraſe it: But done in token of our Dedicating of *Them* unto *God*, and in Evidence and Token that they are His. All Delivery and Surrender muſt paſs with ſome Formality, ſome Rite; and *Baptiſm* is that Formality, that Rite, by which

which we Chriſtians do paſs over, and aſſign our ſelves, and all our Children to God.

The fair Stating and Illuſtrating the mentioned Points, in which I beat a Path but little trodden, is mainly the Buſineſs of the *Letters*, of which I make a Humble Offering to Your Ladyſhip: In writing *which*, next to the Zeal and Deference that I ow'd to *Truth*, I propounded to my ſelf no greater Satisfaction, than the Occaſion they would give

give me, of gratifying an Ambition I have ever had to Publish my self,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most Humble and Devoted Servant,

Richard Burthogge.

Adver-

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

READER.

THE Concurrence *of Events, that, at laſt, prevailed upon me to engage in the Controverſie of* Infants Baptiſm, (*managed on my part in the following* Letters) *was ſo little ordinary*; *that, if* any *be enough to make a* Providence, This, *Reader, were it proper to acquaint thee with* it, *would, I am confident, even in thy Judgment, be thy Perſwaſion other-*

otherwiſe what it will, appear a great One.

The Letters *themſelves do intimate on what Occaſion originally they came to be Written, and alſo how to be Publiſhed, and that too without my Adverſaries; and therefore, I need not give my ſelf the trouble of Writing, or thee the trouble of Reading more, in reference to theſe Points. Only, it may not be improper to do my ſelf this piece of Juſtice, to add, That though I do not Publiſh my Adverſaries Letters, (for that I leave to him, as moſt proper): Yet I have not been wanting in mine Own, to Publiſh all his Arguments that concern me, both in all the Strength he gives them, and with all the further Inforcement my ſelf could poſſibly add to them. This, a Judicious*

Reader

Reader will eaſily perceive me to have done; and this I did, as well for that Reſpect and Care I owe to my own Reputation, as for that I owe and pay to Truth. I am of Alexander's Mind; I would not ſteal a Victory; and Truth need not: It is ſtronger than all things. I acknowledge, I have received a Letter from him, ſince my Laſt; but that Letter (as Others) ſo little to the Purpoſe, unleſs Reflections and Extravagancies be ſo, that I do not find my ſelf obliged to any other Anſwer, than what in my Laſt is added and marked thus [*,] and that's but little: And an underſtanding Reader will plainly ſee, there was not much need of that: It is but one Paragraph, and two or three Words, by way of Illuſtration.

Some

Some happily may admire, that in a Rich and Fruitful Subject, as this is, I am ſo barren in Citations; but they may pleaſe to know, that (ſeeing a Doctrine is not true becauſe a Multitude avouch it, any more than a Cuſtom good becauſe a Multitude follow it) I do not value Authorities *in the Search and Inveſtigation of Truth, further than as they are* Evidences *to Matters of Fact. Indeed, on this Account I might have Cited properly enough, many hundred Authors, as Witneſſes, to confirm* Baptiſm *to have been of old a* Jewiſh Ceremony, *uſed in Initiation of Proſelytes, both Male and Female, Adult and Infant; but that was done abundantly before, by the Learned Dr.* Hammond, *(as I remember) in a ſet Diſcourſe of*

Baptiſm, *and incidentally by Mr.* Ainſworth, *in his* Annotations *on* Geneſis 17*th*; *and by many others*: *and* Repetition *is a dull thing.* The Argument *I go upon, as I do manage it, is not common; and hath little Authority to make it good, beſide that of ſound* Reaſon, *and good* Senſe, *and that better of the* Harmony *of the* Holy Scripture; *into* which, *rightly underſtood, it doth already open no ſmall Lights, and may do more, if well improved.*

To the Queſtion, How I came to hit upon it? *I ſay, I was concerned to ſee an Article of that Importance, which* Infants Baptiſm *by moſt is taken to be of, and indeed is of, to hang on Wyres only, and (as ſome phraſe it) by* Geometry:

It muſt, I thought, have ſure and ſolid Foundations, and ſuch I could not ſee it to be Owner of, unleſs it were inlay'd (as I find it is) in the very Conſtitution *of an* Inſtituted Church, *and in the* Harmony *of* Scripture. *Analogy of* Scripture, *is the ſureſt* Baſis *of Truth, in matters of* Revealed Religion; *as Analogy of* Nature *is of Truth, in Points of* Philoſophy.

This Argument *I have ſo much ſpoken to in the following* Letters, *that I think there needs no more to make it perfect, and fully convincing, but to add theſe few following* Conſiderations.

Firſt, *That* Baptiſm *or* Waſhing *was at firſt a* Jewiſh Ceremony, *and* that Aaron, *and his*

Sons were *Baptized* or *Waſhed with* Water *at the Door of the Tabernacle of the* Congregation: That *the Baptizing of* Proſelytes, *very probably was done in imitation of That, and the other Waſhings among the* Jews; *and to ſignifie the Cleanſing of* Them *from the Defilement of* Gentiliſm: *And* that *the* Chriſtian Baptiſm *in the* Inſtitution *of it, had Aſpect to both Theſe, is alſo probable*; *we* Gentiles *being by* Baptiſm *ſanctified unto* God, *and made his Prieſts*; *which ſeems very clearly to be implyed by the* Apoſtle, *when he calls* Baptiſm, λουτρὸν, *a Laver*, (Waſhing *our Tranſlators render*) *of* Regeneration, *in Alluſion certainly to the* Laver *under the Law, which was ſet between the Tent of the* Congregation,

gation, *and the* Altar. *Compare* Exod. 40. 6, 12. *with* Tit. 3. 5.

Again, *Let it be conſidered, that as no Alteration in the leaſt, in reference to the* Subject *of* Circumciſion, *was made by* Moſes, *from the* Rule *in the* Firſt Inſtitution *under* Abraham; *ſo that under* Moſes *it is evident*, Firſt, *That if a* Proſelyte *were* Maſter *of a* Family, *the giving of* Himſelf *to* God *by* Circumciſion, *would not ſuffice to qualifie him for the* Paſſover; *except he gave his* Family *too, and that all his* Males *were Circumcized.* God *look'd not on him as a Convert, if he gave not all* His, *as well as Himſelf*, Exod. 13. 48, 49. *And this is the more remarkable, for that the* Proſelytes *were* (*as*) *the* Firſt-Fruits *of the*

Gentiles. Secondly, *That thoſe Strangers in the Family of a* Jew, *who were the Maſters* Own, *or his Property, were on his Account admitted to participate the* Paſſover; *for he was to give them unto* God, *as having Right and Dominion in them; and therefore might diſpoſe of them: For This only is the Reaſon, why the Servant of the* Jew, *who was* Bought *with his Money, might eat the Paſſover; and the* Hired *Servant not; namely, that the Former as being bought with his Maſter's Money, was his Property, his own; and therefore given with himſelf to* God, *and ſo received* God's *Mark of* Circumciſion, *and conſequently became capable of the Paſſover: But the* Hired Servant *being not his Maſter's, but his own Man,*

conſe-

conſequently could not, without his own Conſent and free Act, be given and diſpoſed of by his Maſter. But if he would Voluntarily *be Circumcized, and ſo become Partaker of the Paſſover, nothing letted him though he were an Hired Servant, no more than any other Forreigner. See for this* Exod. 12. 43, 44, 45.

The next main Conſideration I would wiſh to be reminded ſeriouſly, is, That in the New-Teſtament *no* New *Rule is given either by* Jeſus Chriſt *Himſelf, or by his Apoſtles and Followers, about the* Subjects *of the Sign of the* Covenant; *which* Sign *now is* Baptiſm: *And therefore, certainly, it leaves us to the Grounds and Reaſons of the* Old-Teſtament, [*and to conformable*

and conſtant Practice in the Jewiſh *Uſe of* Baptiſm *in the Admiſſion of Proſelytes*;] *eſpecially ſeeing the Seed* (*which* Seed *Believers are in* Chriſt) *are under the ſame* General Obligation *to keep the* Covenant *in the Sign, and by the very ſelf-ſame* Rule *and* Direction *which* Abraham *had himſelf. And then it is Rational to think, That as* Abraham *was made to underſtand it in* Circumciſion, *ſo we muſt underſtand it in* Baptiſm; *namely, to take in* Infants *as well as the* Adult. *This is the more probable, becauſe in the* Goſpel-Inſtitution *we find that* Baptiſm *went by Families and Houſes, as* Circumciſion *did both before the Law, and under it; as alſo, that in Baptizing of Proſelytes, not only* Male *and* Female,

male, *but* (*as I ſaid*) Adult *and* Infants *were admitted.*

In the laſt Place; *It would be conſidered, that in the firſt Sign of the* Covenant, *which was* Circumciſion, *though* all Infants *were not taken in* directly *and* actually, *yet* none *of them were excluded from it as* Infants; *but only as* Females: *For the Nature of that* Sign *was ſuch, that, in the Actual Adminiſtration of it, no* Female *was a Competent Subject*: *So that, in the firſt Signing by Virtue of the* Covenant; as much *as any Adult Perſons were taken in,* ſo much *thoſe that were not Adult*; *even* Infants *were taken in alſo*: *And if* then, *the* Females *were not Actually ſigned*; *ſo neither in the Letter, and by expreſs Denomination of them, were they*

they then *taken into the* Covenant. *For as the Sign was* directly *given only to the* Males, *ſo the Promiſe alſo, in terms, was only to the* Males, [Abraham *and* Iſaac.] *But then, as the* Females *were* included *in the* Males, *in the* Covenant *and* Promiſe, (*which, I think, no Body will deny*;) *ſo, by like Reaſon, they were* included *alſo in the* Sign. *If any ask the Reaſon, why the* Females *are not taken notice of in the* Old-Teſtament, *as much as the* Males? *and why, at firſt, they were not, as it were, by name taken into* Covenant, *and ſo ſigned with the* Sign *of it*; *but included only in* Men, *and accounted as ſigned in them? there may be many Reaſons*; *but among them, two eſpecially. The* Firſt *is, That* God *is Uniform in his Works*; *and*

that

that as in the First Creation he made Adam *first, who was then the whole Kind, and comprehended the* Woman *in his Rib; and then afterward took the* Woman *out of* Adam: *So in the* Restoration, *or* New Creation, *he would first by Name begin with the* Man, *and take him into* Covenant, *and Sign him; and take the* Woman *in but* Inclusively, *as comprehended in* Man, *and as an* Appendix *to him; which he did in the* Dispensation, *under* Abraham *and* Moses. *But then, afterwards, as he took the* Woman *in the* Creation *out of* Man; *so under* Christ, *in the* New-Testament-Dispensation, *he took the* Woman *in her own Name, and put his Sign on her too: Both* Men *and* Women *are Baptized. A* Second,

and

and perhaps no leſs effectual Reaſon, is, That the Woman *had been firſt (as the* Apoſtle *obſerves) in the Tranſgreſſion; ſhe had ſpoyled the* Firſt Creation, *and the* Work *of* God *in it;* [What's this that thou haſt done? *ſaith* God *to the* Woman:] *Therefore, as a Mark of his Divine Diſpleaſure,* God *would not in the Inſtitution of his Covenant of* Grace, *take her in her* Own Name *and* Perſon, *or otherwiſe than by* Incluſion *in the* Man, *into the Participation of it; until by bringing forth the Lord* Chriſt, *the great Foundation of the* New *and Better* Creation, *ſhe had made him, as it were, ſome* Reparation; *and therefore,* Chriſt *is emphatically ſaid to be* Made of a Woman. *Methinks the* Apoſtle *hath an Aſpect towards*

both

both these Reasons, in 1 Tim. 2. 13, 14, 15. *But howsoever that is, sure I am, 'tis out of question, that before* Christ, *there was no little difference between* Male *and* Female, *in the Account of* Scripture: *for if a* Woman *bore a* Man-Child, *she was to be unclean but* Seven *days, and to continue in the Blood of her Purifying but* Thirty-three *days: But if she brought forth a* Maid-Child, *then she was to be unclean* Two *weeks, and to continue in the Blood of her Purifying* Sixty-six *days: So much Difference,* Then, *there was between* Male *and* Female; *for so we read in* Exod. 12. 2, 4, 5, 6. *But,* Now, *the Case is alter'd: For under* Jesus Christ *there is no Difference; no more* Now *between the* Male *and* Female, *than between*

the

the Jew *and* Greek; *for so the* Apostle *Gal.* 3. 28. There is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither *Male* nor *Female*; for You are all one in *Christ Jesus. A plain Text; wherein the* Apostle *as well implies there* Was *a Distinction and Difference before, as he affirms that there* Is *none now.*

As for mine Adversary; *though I do not take him to be the Greatest Clark in the World, or as Learned in the Learned Languages, and Human Authors, as many others; and though I take it to have been a piece of Vanity in him, to tell me, as he doth,* [That as he remembred, one of the School-men said, *&c.*] *because I have Reason to believe, he understands the School-men, as little*

as

Hebrew or Greek: *Yet I do not apprehend it any Diſgrace (as ſome would have it,) to have been engaged with him; both for that he is a careful, painful, and induſtrious ſearching Perſon, much converſant in the preſent Controverſie; and, I believe, can ſay as much for his* Perſwaſion, *as any other what ever: as alſo, for that the Point in Controverſy between us, is not a* Point *of Human Learning: Here (for the main) is no need of* Greek *or* Hebrew, *or of the Subtilties of* School-men, *or of Exactneſs of Criticiſme: It muſt be decided* plainly *by good Senſe, and by the Harmony of the* Scripture; *and an* Engliſh Bible *(to which he doth appeal) ſuffices for that.*

I do confeſs, I believe that ſome of the Grounds *which I have laid,*

will

will have no little Influence toward an Alteration *in many received* Schemes: *But whether I have laid them right or not, I am no competent Judge. For though I am much confirmed in the Verity of* Them *by their undergoing of* One *kind of* Teſt, *without any Loſs; yet before I do advance them from being Points of meer* Opinion, *to be Points of ſome Degree of* Faith, *I am willing they ſhould undergo all* Others. *And therefore,* Reader, *they are put into thy Hands, (for I have done with them) to weigh and judge them.*

ERRATA.

PAge 2. line 4. add *be*. p. 12. l. 20. read *by*. p. 16. l. 20. dele *it*. p. 49. l. 27. read *to*. p. 53. l. 23. dele *capable of it*. p. 54. l. 14. dele ( ). p. 99. l. 21. read *in way of Covenant through Chriſt for Grace*. p. 102. l. 17. read *of all the Faithful*. p. 103. l. 11. dele *now*. p. 105. l. 18. read *of Geneſis*. p. 110. l. 5. add). p. 115. l. 27. dele : p. 128. l. 30. read *be underſtood of that only*. p. 129. l. 5. read *ſame*. p. 150. l. 20. read *is meant*.

AN

AN

ARGUMENT

FOR

Infants Baptiſm, &c.

The Firſt Letter.

Dear Sir,

I Cannot believe my ſelf obliged by the Occaſional Diſcourſe (which I held almoſt a Year and three Quarters ago) about *Infants Baptiſm*, to ingage any further in that Controverſie, much leſs deliberately and ſolemnly; yet, having received ſo large, and ſo elaborate an *Endeavour* for my Satisfaction, and ſo importunate and iterated Requeſts, to give

you the Reſult of my moſt cool and ſerious Conſiderations of what you have done in *It*; I may not be ſo much wanting in Civility to your *Deſires*, and in Obedience to the *Call* I believe in them, as to decline the Incumbence and Obligation under which *They* put me to anſwer: And ſo, either to receive my ſelf a further Illumination in the Point, or (which is better, and which I hope) to give it.

Only, let me have leave to tell you, (That) I am ſenſible enough how difficult a Task it is, in it ſelf, to Eradicate an *Opinion* grown inveterate by length of Time, and perhaps confirm'd by frequent Spoyls and Trophies over weak Oppoſers of *It*; and that 'tis more difficult for one in my Circumſtances, ſubject to a thouſand Avocations and Diverſions; and who, at the Arrival of your *Letter*, thought of nothing leſs in all the World, than of being engaged in this manner againſt *Anabaptiſm*; and with a Perſon, a great part of whoſe time hath been imployed in Thoughts and Study about it.

And yet, under Diſadvantages ſo great againſt ſo great Advantages, believing my ſelf in the right; in that Confidence, I have made a Reſolution to let you know my Sentiments; and the rather, becauſe I take you

you (and I wiſh, I may not be miſtaken in it) to be ſo unfeign'd a Lover of Truth, and ſo Candid a one, that you will make Allowance for any *Byaſs* in your Mind, in favour of your Opinion, which a long *Preſcription* may give it; and that you will not *Refuſe* any *Light* that may be offered, if you have no other Reaſons for doing *So*, than either that *It* is *New* unto you, or that you have not ſtruck *It* your ſelf.

As for my *Sentiments* on this Subject, that you may conceive *Them* with the greater Clearneſs, as alſo for Order ſake, I will reduce them unto *Two Heads*. Firſt, I will let you ſee the *Miſtakes* under which you are, as to your Apprehenſions of the *Grounds* of my *Arguments for Infants Baptiſm*, as deduced from the Covenant of *Abraham*. And *Then*, I will diſplay the *Argument* it ſelf in all its Evidence and Force, as it is bottomed on that *Baſis*: And this, without concerning of my ſelf in *Other* Arguments inſiſted on by others, and alſo touched and reflected on by you.

The *Miſtakes* you are under in your Apprehenſions of the *Grounds* of my *Argument*, are *Two*, and very great ones: The *Firſt*, That you conceive me to raiſe my Superſtructure of *Infants Baptiſm* on this Foundation, [*That the believing Gentiles*,

and their Poſterity, are in All *reſpects to be bleſſed, as believing* Abraham *was*;] which, ſay you, is Abſurd.

And well you may (ſay ſo;) for indeed, *Abraham* had peculiar Bleſſings appropriated to his Perſon; as to be the Father of all the Faithful, and particularly, of believing *Gentiles*, (the Father of many Nations;) and therefore, inſtead of *Abram*, he was called *Abraham*. But though *All* the Bleſſings believing *Abraham* had, did not deſcend on his Spiritual Children, or his Seed, the believing *Gentiles*; yet, if *Any* Bleſſing of believing *Abraham*'s did deſcend; as *That* of the Promiſe did, it muſt be underſtood, (that) the *Obligations* and *Duties* ariſing from the Nature of the Bleſſing, (which did deſcend) or that are annexed to it, (if there be any *Such*) muſt deſcend too: And ſo, that the Seed, in that reſpect in which it is equally bleſſed with believing *Abraham*, muſt be equally obliged with him, to all the Duties and Incumbencies, that are the Conſequents and Reſults of that Bleſſing.

Your *Second Miſtake* is, That you apprehend me to conceive, [" That every Child " of a believing Parent, by vertue of his " Birth, Priviledge, and as he is a Natural " Deſcendant of ſuch a Father or Mother, " is

"is a true Child of *Abraham*, or a Belie-
" ver, (for that I mean) or, in your own
" words, *That the Natural Poſterity of Be-*
" *lieving Gentiles*, barely as ſuch, *are all*
" *of them the* Spiritual Seed *of* Abraham,
" (or Believers) *and conſequently ſuch as*
" *are entitled* (on the Account of being his
" Spiritual Seed, or Believers) *unto* Abra-
" ham's *Covenant and Bleſſing.*] And in Oppoſition unto *This*, you much enlarge; ſhewing the many great Abſurdities, and ill Conſequences of it, even to *Fifteen:* Arguments, which truly as to any other who hath Senſe I think, and I am ſure as to my ſelf, are all needleſs, and might all have been ſpared.

Certainly, I demand not half ſo much to enforce the Argument I uſed; I think not every *Child* of a Believer to be a *Believer* himſelf in any Senſe; much leſs, that Saving Grace is as *Original* as Sin, or that it comes by Traduction. All I poſtulate to build my Argument, is, That the (true) believing *Gentile* doth not forfeit, by believing, his natural Right to his Child; but that the Children of True Believers now, under the Goſpel, are as much theirs, and in the ſame Right, as the Natural Children of *Abraham* were his. This is all the Queſtion that I beg, and this ſure you will not deny me.

Only, by the way, I pray you to make no more of my *Conceſſion*, than I intend it for; for when ſome Pious and very *Learned Men* have argued for *Infants Baptiſm, from the Children of Believers their being* Abraham's *Spiritual Seed*, they mean not, I ſuppoſe, by calling them *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, as I do, and as you do; that they are *Actual Believers*, and conſequently Children of the Faith of *Abraham*; but only, that they are Perſons of a *Religious Conſideration*, and (in ſome ſenſe) *Holy*, and related to *God*. And meaning but *So*; though I acknowledge Children not to be *Abraham*'s Seed in the *Senſe* I mentioned, as *Abraham*'s Seed is taken for Actual Believers, and you have proved by Fifteen Arguments that they are not, nor can be *Abraham*'s Seed in this *Senſe*; my Conceſſion gives you no advantage, nor do your Arguments ſignifie any thing againſt *Them*; who, uſing the Expreſſion in *Another* Senſe, are nothing concerned; for if *They* take Spiritual Seed in *One Senſe*, and *You* in your Arguments take it in *Another*, you do not really oppoſe them, though you may think you do; nor are your Arguments pertinent; and the Diſpute between you, as to that, is indeed but Strife about Words.

Thus

Thus I have, with all the Clearneſs and Fairneſs imaginable, let you ſee your *Two Miſtakes* about the Argument I urged; and therefore, ſeeing you do not apprehend aright the Grounds on which I go (in it,) I am only obliged to you for your charitable *Endeavours* towards my Satisfaction; but not (in the leaſt) for any *Effect* of thoſe Endeavours.

It now remaineth, that I perform what I promiſed in the Second Place; which is, To lay out the *Argument* for *Pedobaptiſm*, as it is founded on the *Covenant*, or Bleſſing of *Abraham*, in all its Force and Evidence; which, to do to ſome purpoſe, I will demonſtrate.

Firſt, That *the Covenant of* Abraham, *which is called the Bleſſing of* Abraham, *or the Promiſe of the Spirit, is ſtill in being; and is that Covenant of Grace the true believing Gentiles are under.*

Secondly, That *in reſpect of that Covenant of Promiſe, which is called the Bleſſing of* Abraham, *and the Promiſe of the Spirit, or the Spiritual Promiſe, all the Seed that hath the Benefit of it, are under equal Obligations to the Duty and Incumbence ariſing from it, with* Abraham *himſelf.*

Thirdly, I will ſhew, *That the Duty and*

Incumbence to which Abraham *was obliged, ariſing from the Covenant, or Bleſſing given to him, was, by way of Reſtipulation, to dedicate and give himſelf, and all his to* God; *and, in token of that Dedication of himſelf, and of all that was his, to wear himſelf the Signe of the Covenant, and put it as a Cognizance, and Badge, and Mark of* God *upon all his that was capable of it.*

Fourthly, I will alſo ſhew, *That from* Abraham's *Dedication of himſelf, and of all his to* God, *there ariſes a Diſtinction of Holineſs into Internal and External, Abſolute and Relative; and that this Diſtinction (of Holineſs) is Evangelical.*

And having evidenced theſe Four things, I will then proceed, in ſhort, to form my Argument.

In order to the evidencing of the Firſt Particular, which is, *That the Covenant of Promiſe made to* Abraham, *which is called the Bleſſing of* Abraham, *and the Promiſe of the Spirit, or the Spiritual and Evangelical Promiſe*, (that this) *is ſtill in being, and is the Covenant of Grace*, into a Participation of which, the (true) believing *Gentiles* are taken: I only *Premiſe*, That *That* is the *Covenant* of *Grace* the believing *Gentiles* are under, *Which* is the true Ground

and

and Foundation of all their Hopes, and of all their Comforts; and *Which*, by having a Title to it, and Intereſt in it, doth give them a Title to, and Intereſt in the Cœleſtial Inheritance, the Heavenly Country, the Everlaſting Manſions in the Father's Houſe; and, in a word, to Salvation. And *This* the mentioned *Covenant*, the Bleſſing of *Abraham*, and the Promiſe of the Spirit is, and doth: *This* is the true Ground and Foundation of all the Hopes of *Gentile*-Believers, and of all their Comforts; and a Title in *This*, is the only Title they have to the Heavenly Bleſſedneſs and Salvation, or (as the Apoſtle is pleaſed to ſtile it) to the Inheritance. For thus in the *Third* of *Gallatians*, the Apoſtle carries it; when *Verſe* the 16*th*, he affirms, *That to* Abraham, *and to his Seed, were the Promiſes made*, and *Verſe* the 18*th* adds, That if *the Inheritance be of the* Law, *it is no more of the* Promiſe; *but* God *gave it* (namely the Inheritance) *to* Abraham *by* Promiſe: And by *What* Promiſe, but that ratified Covenant of Promiſe, *I will be a* God *to thee, and to thy Seed?* As appears by comparing it with *Verſe* the 16*th*. But he aſſerteth *This* more clearly afterwards, in *Verſe* the 29*th*; where he ſheweth, both that the only *Title* to the *Inheritance* is *Heir-*

ſhip,

ſhip, according to the Promiſe; and that the only way of *Becoming Heirs* according to the Promiſe, and ſo of being intereſted in it, and entitled to it, is by becoming *the Seed of Abraham* to become the *Children of God*; and the only way of *Becoming the Seed of Abraham* (for the *Gentiles*,) is by *Putting on of Chriſt* through believing: *For*, ſaith he, *if you be Chriſt*'s, or the Members of *Chriſt*; what then? *Then you are Abraham's Seed*; and what if *Abraham*'s Seed? what then? *Then you are Heirs according to the Promiſe.* In ſhort, this is the *Clymax*; if Believers, then *Chriſt*'s; if *Chriſt*'s, then *Abraham*'s Seed; if *Abraham*'s Seed, then Heirs according to the Promiſe: for the Promiſe is, *I will be a* God *to Thee, and thy Seed, and I will give to Thee, and thy Seed*, &c.

Nor doth it make any Alteration in the Caſe, that *Faith* is now the requiſite Condition of Salvation, or that we muſt believe to be ſaved: *This* but evidences the more clearly, that the *Goſpel* is but a Renovation of the Covenant of *Abraham*; for *as* it *is* through Faith, that we *Gentiles* do become *Chriſt*'s, and by being *Chriſt*'s, that we become the Seed of *Abraham*, and conſequently Heirs of Salvation according to the Promiſe; *So* it *was* through Faith, the

the Righteouſneſs of Faith, that *Abraham* (the Father of the Faithful) had the Promiſe himſelf: For ſo the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 4. 13. for *the Promiſe, That he ſhould be the Heir of the World, was not to* Abraham, *or to his Seed through the Law, but through the Righteouſneſs of* Faith. *Abraham* believed *God*, and We *Chriſt*; it was through Faith, that *Abraham* had the Promiſe; and through Faith alſo, that we the believing *Gentiles* have it; as being Children not of *Abraham*'s Body, but of *Abraham*'s Faith, *Rom.* 4. 12, 13, 16.

And if the *Promiſe* made to *Abraham*, be the *Ground* and Foundation of all our Hopes, and all our Expectations, as we are *Chriſtians*, and it be the *True Covenant* of Grace; to be ſure, it is ſtill *in being*, or we do but beat the Air, and are at a loſs; our Hope is in vain, and our Rejoycing in vain; which *God* forbid: And in being it is; for the Law that came four hundred and thirty Years after, did not, could not *Diſanul* the Promiſe that went before; and if the Law did not, if the Law could not, nothing elſe did, nothing elſe can diſanul it: This the Apoſtle evidences, *Gal.* 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. And ſurely, the Promiſe to *Abraham*, *I will be a* God *to thee, and to thy Seed* &c. is a Covenant, a ratified Covenant, and confirm-

ed

ed by two immutable things, by Word and Oath, *In which it is impoſſible for* God *to Lie*; and therefore, cannot be diſanulled; and if it be not diſanulled, it is ſtill in being.

Here I thought to have diſmiſſed the Firſt Particular, and ſo (to) proceed to the Second: But it ſtrikes into my Mind, that you may think I have not clearly enough expreſſed what I mean by the *Covenant*, the Bleſſing and the Promiſe of *Abraham*, which did deſcend on the *Gentiles*; which if ſo, would be Matter of a freſh Diſpute: And therefore, though I think the Scriptures I have inſiſted on already, do ſufficiently inſtruct us in what the Promiſe is; yet, to leave no room for any further Miſtakes, I ſhall be more expreſs in it.

By the Promiſe, the Bleſſing, the Covenant of *Abraham*, (for under all theſe three Terms it is repreſented by the Apoſtle) I mean that Covenant of Promiſe made to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. conſiſting of *Two* Parts; a more *Spiritual* Part, in the *7th*, *I will be a* God *to thee*, *and thy Seed*; and a more *Temporal* one in the *8th*, *And I will give*, &c. And I take in *Both*, becauſe I find the Apoſtle ſaying, *That to* Abraham, *and to his Seed*, *were the Promiſes made*: the Promiſes; not a Promiſe, (which had left it doubtful;) but the Promiſes, as ſpeaking not

not of the *One* only, *I will be a* God *to thee, and thy Seed*, which is the Spiritual Part; but of the *Other* alſo, which is the Temporal, *I will give to thee, and thy Seed*, &c. Thus the Covenant of Promiſe involveth and includeth in it *Two* Promiſes; the One of which indeed is *Principal*, the Other but *Additional*; but *Both* are in the Covenant, in the Bleſſing, and conſequently *Both* are ratified and eſtabliſhed: The *Promiſes* were made to *Abraham*, and to his Seed; the *Covenant* in both reſpects deſcends.

I know you take it for a very ſtrong Argument, That the Covenant of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. cannot be the Evangelical and Goſpel-Covenant; becauſe it is a *Mixt* one, and compoſed of a *Temporal* (as well as of an *Eternal*) Bequeſt: But for that Reaſon, I the *Rather* take it to be Evangelical; For this is Goſpel, that *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things*; that is, in all reſpects, in reſpect of this World, and in reſpect of the Other: And why ſo? Why, it hath the Promiſe; *Having* (*the*) *Promiſe of the Life that now is*, as well as of that to come: And what is this but a *Finger*, to point you to the Covenant of Promiſe; as the Evangelical Covenant, the Promiſe, the Bleſſing that did deſcend on the *Gentiles*? 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.

And

And indeed, the *Inheritance* promiſed to *Abraham*, and which in, by, and under him, is deſcended on the *Gentiles*, is not only a Cœleſtial, but a Terreſtrial one alſo: For by that Promiſe, *Abraham* was not only the *Heir* of *Heaven*, but alſo Heir of the *World*; and ſo the Apoſtle ſtiles him: And the ſame Apoſtle tells *Us*, *All is Ours*; and *Abraham* being conſtituted by the Promiſe, *Heir* of the World, He and his Deſcendants, according to the Fleſh, were to take Poſſeſſion of it, and to have *Livery* of *Seiſin* given in *Canaan*; a Livery of Seiſin, which was given indeed, and taken but in *Part* of the World, (as Livery of Seiſin uſually is) but in the *Name* of the *Whole*.

It is true, *Canaan* only was promiſed in the Letter, and was Inherited only by the Carnal Seed and Deſcendants of *Abraham*: But then it muſt be conſidered, that in the Covenant there is more implyed, than is expreſſed in the Letter; and that as in the *Letter* it ſpeaketh of the Seed which is Natural, namely *Iſaac*; yet, in the *Myſtery*, it meaneth *Chriſt*, and that Principally: So, though in the *Letter* it ſpeaketh but of *Canaan*, as given for a Poſſeſſion, and enjoyed ſo by the Carnal Seed; yet in the *Myſtery*, it means the whole World, of which

Canaan

Canaan was a Part: in which indeed he took Poſſeſſion, or had Livery and Seiſin given him; but, as I ſaid, in the Name of the Whole. *Abraham* was Heir of the World; and ſo are all Believers, as *Abraham*'s Seed; for *All* is *Ours:* But how? For We are *Chriſt*'s, and *Chriſt* is *God*'s: And it is, *I will be a* God *to Thee, and thy Seed*; which Seed is *Chriſt*. This is the Believer's Title, and this his Deed; his *Charter*, by which he holds All.

And having evidenc'd the *Firſt* Particular, That the Covenant made with *Abraham*, or the Bleſſing of *Abraham*, the Promiſe of the Spirit is ſtill in force, and is that Covenant of Grace by which believing *Gentiles*, the true Seed, now both have and hold their Title to Heaven, and to Earth too. It will not, I ſuppoſe, require either much Time, or much Argument, to ſecure the *Second*; which is, *That the true Spiritual Seed of* Abraham, *the believing Gentiles, who have the Benefit and Advantage of that Spiritual Promiſe and Bleſſing, and to whom it is made as well as to* Abraham, *are under equal Obligation to the Duty and Incumbence ariſing from it, or annexed to it, with* Abraham *himſelf*. For it is a common Notion, a Sentiment approved by the Light of Nature, That he that reap-

eth

eth any Profit and Advantage by a *Grant*, ought to bear the Burthen, and anſwer the Duty and Incumbence that accompanies *It*. And indeed, to hope for *Salvation*, and other Benefits convey'd in the Covenant and Charter of *Abraham*, without ſubmitting to the Duties and Obligations that do ariſe there-from, or are annexed thereto; were for a Perſon to claim an *Inheritance* by a *Deed* of Conveyance, without holding himſelf obliged to the Covenants and Proviſions with which *It* is granted *Therein*. Certain it is, as I have ſhewn already, that the believing *Gentile* claimeth, hath, holdeth nothing, but in, by, and under *Abraham*: He is *Chriſt*'s, and ſo *Abraham*'s Seed; and ſo Heir according to the Promiſe: And he that claimeth, hath, holdeth nothing but in, by, and under *Abraham*, muſt claim, have, hold, as *Abraham* did, according to the Tenor and Obligation of the Deed of Gift, the Charter, the Covenant of Promiſe, which it pleaſed *God* to convey it by, and with the ſame Incumbence and Duty.

And this remindeth me of the *Third* Particular, which I promiſed to demonſtrate; namely, *That the Duty and Incumbence to which* Abraham *was obliged, ariſing from the Covenant or Bleſſing given to him, was,*

in

in way of Reſtipulation, to dedicate and give himſelf, and all his, to God; *and in token of that Dedication of himſelf, and all his, to put the Sign of the Covenant, as the Cognizance, and Mark, and Badge of* God *on all his that was capable of it, as well as to wear it himſelf.*

I know it cannot be difficult to You, (if it can to any Other) to conceive that in *Reſtipulation* unto *God*, who had made over unto *Abraham*, not *Himſelf* only, but *All he has*, (that) *Abraham Correſpondently* ſhould give *Himſelf*, and *All he had* to *God*: And indeed, this *Mutual Stipulation* between *God* and *Abraham*, [That *God* and all His ſhould be *Abraham*'s, and *Abraham* and all his ſhould be *God*'s] is the very *Eſſence* and *Subſtance* of the Covenant: *I* will be *Theirs*, and *They* ſhall be *Mine*; *I will be a God to Thee and thy Seed, and Thou and thy Seed ſhall keep my Covenant.*

It is true, the Covenant doth run in *Abſolute* and Promiſſory Terms, and therefore is called the *Covenant of Promiſe*; but yet *to be* a Covenant, as there muſt be *Parties*, ſo there muſt be a *Mutual* Stipulation between them: And here, the *Stipulation* on the Part of *Abraham*, though it be not ſo expreſs and literal, is plainly implied in the Duty and Incumbence *God* impoſes on

him, in relation to the *Covenant*, as an Obligation and Conſequence ariſing from the Nature and Merits of *It*: Which Duty and Incumbence, and the Conſequentialneſs of it from the Covenant, is, *Gen.* 17. Ver. 9. *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.* Or, more conſonantly to the Letter of the Original, but to the ſame Senſe, (and in Covenant-form,) *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed, and I will give to thee and thy Seed*, &c. and, *Thou and thy Seed ſhall keep my Covenant.* In the *Former*, is the Stipulation or Promiſe *God* is pleaſed to make to *Abraham*, and to his Seed: And, in the *Latter*, the Obligation and Conſequence it lies upon them; and which, therefore, *God* expects too, as importing *Their Stipulation*, and that Acknowledgment they owe for *His*. *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*: Therefore, wherefore? Therefore, becauſe I have Eſtabliſhed my Covenant, to give my Self and all I have to thee; to give my Self, and give *Canaan*, and in *Canaan* the World: *Therefore*, thou ſhalt give thy ſelf, and all thine to Me: And in token of it, (that thy ſelf and all thine is Mine) thou ſhalt obſerve my Covenant in the ſign of it; and that ſo, both as to wear the ſign thy ſelf, and to put it upon all thine that is capable

pable of it. This is evident, *Gen.* 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*, &c. *This is my Covenant*, namely, the ſign Circumciſion, *&c.*

You may here, perhaps, not a little wonder, that I uſe ſo *General* and comprehenſive Terms; and that I ſay, the Obligation which lay on *Abraham* from the Covenant, was to dedicate and give *Himſelf*, and *All His*, to *God*; and in token of it, not only himſelf to wear the Sign and Token of the Covenant, which then was Circumciſion; but to put it on *all His* that were capable of it: I ſay, Happily you may not a little wonder, why I ſaid not all his *Seed*; but all *His*: Which, if you do, you will no longer have no cauſe to continue it, than till I tell you, It is to ſignifie, that the Obligation on *Abraham* ariſing from the Covenant, was *Solemnly* to dedic te and give to *God*, together with himſelf, *All* that he had Property in, and Title to, and was Owner of; not his Natural Seed only, the Off-ſpring of his own Body, but even his Servants or Slaves.

And here obſerve; if *Abraham* by vertue of the Incumbence and Obligation which the Covenant of Promiſe did lay upon him, [*Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*] was *Not only* to circumcize his Natu-

ral Off-ſpring, *But his* Slaves and Servants, (as he was, *Gen.* 17. 10, 12.) *It muſt needs follow*, that the putting of the Sign and Token of the Covenant upon *Children* (even then) aroſe *Not* from their being comprehended in the *Seed*, and as *God* was a *God* to *Abraham*'s Seed, and from *God*'s requiring the *Seed* to keep the Covenant: For *His* Infant Slaves and Servants, whom *Yet* he was obliged by the Covenant to Circumcize, were *Not* of his Off-ſpring and *Seed*.

But *How*, then, did the Obligation to Circumcize his Infant *Servants* and Slaves, ariſe from the Covenant; in which no mention, in the leaſt, of Slaves and Servants; but only of *Seed*? Certainly, no otherwiſe than in the *Way* I have mentioned, (and this Conſideration makes it clear) namely, that *Abraham* in Reſtipulation and Anſwer unto *God*, was obliged to dedicate and give himſelf, and *All* he had to him, as *God* did give, and convey, and make himſelf and all he hath to *Abraham*; and conſequently, in Sign and Token of this, [That as *God* hath given and made Himſelf, and all He hath to *Abraham*; ſo that *Abraham* muſt not only dedicate and give himſelf, but, which is the Conſequence of it, all is his to *God*,] the Sign and Token of the Covenant between them, called *God*'s *Covenant*,

nant, and conſequently *God*'s Sign and Mark, muſt be both on *Abraham* himſelf, and *On all that is his:* That is, It is not only to be worn by *Abraham*, to ſhew that he himſelf is *God*'s, and that he hath given himſelf; or by his *Children*, to ſhew that they are *God*'s, and that he hath given them: but even by his *Servants* and Slaves, to ſhew that he hath given *Them* too, and conſequently *All* that he hath. And indeed, he that gives himſelf, gives *All* that he hath, with himſelf: He owns nothing, that is not *His own.* 'Tis as they were *Abraham*'s Property, that his Infant Servants and Slaves were Circumcized; and, doubtleſs, *All* that was *Abraham*'s, capable of Circumciſion, had it on the ſame Account that *Any* had: And therefore, as the *Infant Slaves* were Circumcized *as His* Property, and by vertue of what is ſaid to *Abraham*, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*; ſo were *His Children* alſo: And *Conſider* it, [All Infants were Circumcized by vertue of the *Same* Incumbence.]

As to your Wonder, why I do expreſs the Obligation and Incumbence ariſing upon *Abraham* from the Covenant, in theſe terms, that *He was to dedicate and aſſign himſelf*, and all his; *and*, in token of it, *to put the Covenant* in the Sign of it, *as the*

Mark and Cognizance of God *upon himself, and on all his that was capable of it.* You admire how *Capable* comes in; but you might with more Juſtice have admired, if it had been left out: For *Implied* it muſt be; It could not be his Duty to put the Sign upon *Uncapable* Perſons. But your *Admiration* is *More* the Object of *Mine*, after you have *Granted*, that *God* commanded *Abraham*, (*Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed*) in *General* terms; wherein, you ſay, both Sexes may ſeem to be comprehended, (and indeed ſay I, are ſo) for if he did command in *General Terms*, that *Abraham*, and all *His* (Seed you ſay) ſhould keep the Covenant in the Sign and Token of it; and yet afterward did Inſtitute *Circumciſion* to be that Sign and Token, which was not competent to all: How can the *Generality* of the Precept, (Thou ſhalt put the Sign on all thine; when Circumciſion, that is *Not competible to all*, is that Sign) be underſtood *Accommodouſly* and Conveniently, as it muſt be, but *Thus*; Thou ſhalt put the Sign on *All thine that are capable of it*; and the wearing of it by *Theſe*, ſhall be *Interpreted* the putting of it on *All*.

By this time, I believe, you will be inclinable enough to grant, that I have proved

ved ſufficiently, that *Abraham* was obliged as to dedicate and give *Himſelf*, ſo to dedicate and give *All his*, his Children, and his Servants to *God*, Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth; and, in *Token* of it, to put the Covenant upon *Them* (as far as they were capable thereof,) in the Sign of it, namely, Circumciſion. But you will ſay; "It *Seem-*
"*eth* not to be, (but give me that Expreſ-
ſion again, for *Yon* will be more *Poſitive*)
"it *Was* not done (you will ſay) with any
"Relation unto us believing *Gentiles*, who
"are not Circumcized: And that ſeeing
"there is a Change and Alteration made
"in the Sign, the former Obligation cea-
"ſes; for if Circumciſion it ſelf is paſt,
"and done away, no Duty and Obligati-
"on that but commenced with it, can now
"abide and remain.

But I pray conſider, that not only *Abra-ham* was under Obligation to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, but the *Seed* of *Abraham* alſo; that is, *All thoſe* to whom the Covenant is made, are equally obliged to the Obſervation thereof, in the Sign of it: (And therefore) not only *Abraham* was obliged, but his *Seed* too. For, *as God* is pleaſed to ſay, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed; and I will give to thee, and to thy Seed: So*, he ſays, *Thou*

and thy Seed ſhall keep my Covenant. Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore; (and not only Thou, but) *Thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations:* Thou; thou and thy Seed.

So that, if the *Believing Gentiles* be (as indeed they be) the *True Seed*, and *Principally* intended in the Promiſe; for it is *Seed*, not *Seeds:* Seed; ſpeaking but of one, and that One is *Chriſt*; and *Chriſt* not Perſonal only, but *Myſtical*, or *Chriſt* with his Members; for it is of Many in One: For the Seed, which is to keep the Covenant, is to do it *in their Generations*; not in his Generation, but in their Generations, and that is Plural. I ſay, if the *Believing Gentiles* do become the Seed of *Abraham*, (as they do) they come alſo under *Equal Obligation* to obſerve the Covenant, with *Abraham* himſelf: For it is, *Thou ſhalt keep the Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed.* And to keep the Covenant, (as I have evinc'd already) is for him that is in it, in token of his Dedication and Aſſignment of himſelf, and of all his to *God*, not only to wear the ſign of the Covenant himſelf in his own Perſon, but to put it upon all his that is capable of it; ſo to manifeſt, that he owns not any Intereſt or Property at all in any thing, or Title to any, but what he returns

to

to *God*; and that both himſelf, and all his, are the *Lord*'s. And think, Are not the believing *Gentiles* as much obliged to aſſign, and dedicate, and give all, as *Abraham?* Yes, doubtleſs, and are as much bound to *Shew*, and Own, and Declare they do ſo, as He.

But whereas it may be objected, "That "Circumciſion was the Sign and Token "of the Covenant then, [*This is my Cove-* "*nant which you ſhall keep between Me and* "*You, and thy Seed after thee; Every Man-* "*Child among you ſhall be Circumcized:*] "And that *Circumciſion*, as being a Legal "and Carnal Ceremony, is aboliſhed un- "der the Goſpel; and therefore, as all In- "gagement and Obligation unto *That*, ſo "all Ingagement and Obligation unto any "Sign and Token by vertue of the Com- "mand of *That*, is ceaſed.

I anſwer, Though Circumciſion, that at *Firſt* was the Sign and Token of the Covenant, be taken away; yet it will not follow, that the Obligation to obſerve and keep the Covenant in any *Other* Sign or Token, doth ceaſe with it. And to demonſtrate this; it muſt be minded, that *as* the *Equity* and *Reaſon* of the Command doth hold in *Baptiſm*, as well as in *Circumciſion*; and for any other Sign and Token,

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as well as for *This*; and to the Seed, as well as to *Abraham*; *God* being as much a *God* to the *One*, as to the *Other*: *So* alſo that in the *Form* of the Words, the Obligation impoſed upon *Abraham*, and his Seed, is in the *Firſt* place, to keep the Sign and Token of the Covenant, or to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it: And but in the *Second* (place,) to obſerve Circumciſion; namely, but as it is that Sign. So that a plain Diſtinction is made between the *Obligation* to obſerve the *Sign* and *Token* of the Covenant, (or to keep the Covenant in the Sign and Token of it) and to keep it in *Circumciſion*, as that Sign and Token; the *Former* ariſing from the very Nature of the Covenant, (*Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*) and therefore of as perpetual Obligation and Exiſtence, as the Covenant it ſelf: But the *Latter* is more poſitive, and Secondary. Wherefore, tho' there be an Alteration in the Second, it will not follow that there muſt be one in the Firſt; or that the Covenant ought not to be obſerved in the Sign and Token of it, if, for certain Reaſons, Circumciſion be no longer; but ſomething elſe be that Sign and Token: The taking away the *Second*, doth not deſtroy the Firſt; for being before it, it may be without it. Thou ſhalt keep

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the Sign of the Covenant, that is Firſt; Circumciſion is that Sign, that is Second: And why *One* in the Firſt Place, and the *Other* but in the Second, but to ſhew, the Covenant muſt be kept in the Sign of it, even when no longer Circumciſion, but ſome other thing is in the Counſel of *God* ordained to be that Sign? And indeed, it is much, that the taking, and the putting of the Sign of the Covenant, ſhould (as it is) be called keeping of the Covenant? Muſt not we *Now* keep *God*'s Covenant?

And to the end you may ſee the *Harmony* of the *Scripture*, and (with it) the Cogency of that Illation, which I make from the *Form* of the Words here; ſee the like (Form of Words) in the *Fourth Commandment*, in relation to the *Sabbath*, bottoming the like Illation; *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy*; that is firſt; and, as it is firſt, ſo it is primarily Moral, and Eternal and unchangeable: *But the Seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord*; that is in the ſecond place, and is but ſecondary and poſitive. What? Doth the Obligation to the *Firſt*, and that which is *Primary* in the Command, ceaſe, becauſe there is an Alteration in the *Second*; and that not the *Seventh*, but the *Firſt Day* of the Week is now the *Sabbath* of the *Lord*? Who will ſay it?

So,

So, though Circumciſion be no longer the *Sign* and *Token* of the Covenant, but another thing be *It*; 'twill not follow, the Covenant is no longer to be obſerved in the Sign and Token of it, becauſe not Circumciſion; but that other Thing is now (become) that Sign and Token: Which you will conceive the better, if you bethink that Circumciſion was not aboliſhed in the Goſpel, as it was of the Fathers, but as it was of *Moſes*, (a Diſtinction *Chriſt* himſelf makes;) or not as it had relation to the Covenant of Promiſe, as the Sign of it, as if in that reſpect it were a weak and carnal thing; but as it was *Adopted* by the Legal *Mediator*, and made a Sign of that Adminiſtration and Covenant, in which *He* had to do; for afterwards, who ſo was Circumciſed, did become a Debtor to the whole Law; and therefore, if the Law did ceaſe, Circumciſion could not continue.

But remember, it was on an Evangelical and Gracious Conſideration, that Circumciſion did become the Sign of the Legal Covenant or Adminiſtration: For why was it? Were there not other Matters enough to make Signs of, but that Circumciſion, which was a Sign of the Promiſe, muſt be *Impropriated* to be the Token of the *Moſaick* Covenant? Why was it then? Not truly

(as

(as you may think) to make an Alteration in the *Promiſe*, in reſpect of the Subjects, to which the Sign *Thereof* was to be given, or of any Priviledges, or firſt and immediate Duties and Obligations of *It*; but to eſtabliſh and confirm the Promiſe. For Circumciſion, the Sign and Token of the Promiſe, was, in Divine Wiſdom, annexed to the *Legal Covenant*, (as the Sign and Token of *That*,) for the ſame Reaſon that *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, (who was the Capital Seed, to whom the Promiſe was made) was made the Miniſter of the *Legal Circumciſion*: (He was the Angel that ſpake with *Moſes* in the Wilderneſs, or that gave the Law; and *He*, in the Days of his Fleſh, but preached to the *Jews*.) It was for the Truth of *God*, to *Confirm* the Promiſes to the Fathers; for ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 15. 8. *Now I ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt was the Miniſter of the Circumciſion, for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promiſes unto the Fathers.* I ſay, for *This* Reaſon, as alſo (which is an *Amplification* of it) perhaps to ſhew, that there was no Salvation and Inheritance by the Works of the Law, Circumciſion, which had been the Sign and Token of the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, was taken and applied to be the Sign and Token of the Legal Covenant, which came

by

by *Moſes*; to *Become which* indeed by the (capable) Ceremoniality of it in ſome reſpects, [not as it was a Sign of the Covenant; for there is nothing like a Ceremony in being but that, but as it was confined to one Sex, and (in the Execution and Performance of it) to a certain Day] it was very *Proper* and *Fit*. The Reaſon, I ſay, it was applied to the Legal Covenant, beſides the *Fitneſs* of it, was for the Truth of *God*, to *Confirm*; and not either to *Deſtroy* or *Alter* the Promiſe made unto the Fathers; *God* taking the *Token* of the Covenant of Promiſe, and putting it upon the Legal Covenant, to be a Sign of it, to ſhew he had his Covenant of Promiſe ſtill *in Remembrance*: For *Doing ſo*, He could never look on, or ſo much as think on the Law, but He muſt alſo remember the Promiſe; the Sign and Memorial of the Promiſe being thus annexed, and put to the Law.

[Thus Circumciſion, the firſt Sign and Token of *Abraham*'s Covenant, though it were *Adopted* into the Law of *Moſes*, and made a Sign and Token of that Covenant in which he Mediated; it was *So* but for the ſame Reaſon, that *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf was made the Miniſter of it: That is, not in *Derogation* of the *Promiſes* made to *Abraham*, and his Seed, or of any Priviledges, and

Duties

Duties and Incumbencies ariſing from *Them*, but in *Confirmation* (of them.) *It was for the Faith of God, to confirm the Promiſes to the Fathers.* And therefore, though *as Adopted* into the Law of *Moſes*, and made a Part and Member thereof, it muſt conſequently be annulled, and ceaſe therewith; yet, ſeeing that Adoption of it into the Law was in Confirmation of the Promiſe, the Abrogation and Ceſſation of *Circumciſion* with the Law, as now become a Part of it, cannot be underſtood to be in any Diminution of the Promiſe; *It* not ceaſing as it was a Sign and Token of the Promiſe, but as it was become a Member and Part of the Law.]

And ſo much in Demonſtration of the *Third* Particular, (*viz.*) *That the Duty and Incumbence to which* Abraham (and the ſame is ſaid of his *Seed*) *was obliged, as being in Covenant, was, by way of Reſtipulation, to dedicate and give* Himſelf, *and all* His *to* God; *and, in token of that Dedication of himſelf, and of all his, to put the Sign and Token of the Covenant, as the Cognizance, and Mark, and Badge of* God *upon all his, as well as to wear it himſelf.*

It now remaineth, that I manifeſt what I promiſed to do in the *Laſt* place, (*viz.*) *That from* Abraham's *Gift and Dedication*

of

of Himself and His to God, *there arises a Distinction of Holiness into Internal and External; the Former positive and absolute, the Latter relative: And that this Distinction is Evangelical, and as applicable unto our Times since the Law, as to the Times before it, and under it.*

That from the *Double Dedication* the Covenant of Promise obliges to, and which *Abraham* practised, there arises such a *Distinction* of Holiness, is evident; for to be *Holy*, being to be *Separated or Dedicated to God*, as He is a *God* in Covenant: [For whether it be a Person, or it be a People, that is Holy, still to be Holy is to be Dedicated, to be Separated, it is to *Be* to the *Lord* their *God*; *Deut.* 14. 21. *Thou art an Holy People unto the Lord thy God*: For a People to be *Unto the Lord their God*, is to be Holy; for as to be Blessed or Happy, the *Lord* must be a People's; so to be Holy, they must be the *Lord's*.] And *Seeing* also, that a Person may be *Separated and Dedicated* to the *Lord*, and so become *His* as He is a *God* in Covenant, either by a Separation and Dedication, which is the Persons *Own Act*; as when *Abraham* or any other doth devote and give himself unfeignedly and cordially to *God*; or else he may be so *By* a Dedication and Separation proceeding

ceeding *from Another's Act*, and not his own; he being another's, and conſequently capable of being given and devoted by him.

This being ſo, *What* can be clearer than that there are *Two Kinds* of *Holineſs*; of which, the *Former* (wherein the Perſon himſelf is Active, and doth dedicate and give himſelf) is *Poſitive:* Internal, and Saving: the *Latter*, (in which he is Paſſive, and is but dedicated, aſſigned, and given by another, whoſe he is) is *External* and Relative; not a Holineſs in the Perſon, but a Holineſs upon him. With the *Former* kind of Holineſs, *Abraham* himſelf was Holy; but with the *Latter*, his *Infant* Children and Servants: Who, to ſhew that they were *Gods*, had the Mark of *God* upon them; as ours, to ſhew that they are *So*, have his Name.

And that this Diſtinction of Holineſs into External and Internal, Poſitive and Relative, a Holineſs that is ſaving, and a Holineſs that is not, hath *Place in Goſpel-times*, is as evident as that it had *One* under the *Law*, and before the *Law:* To manifeſt which, I will remind you of a *Text* that hath been much in diſcourſe, and on which, for obvious Reaſons, I will a little inſiſt: It is 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *For the unbelieving Huſ-*

band is ſanctified by or in the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified by or in the Husband. Where note, One Perſon being *Sanctified*, but not being *Saved* by the relation which it hath to another, it can only be *So* Externally: The Believer is a *Saint*, and ſo Internally holy; but the Unbeliever is but *Sanctified* or Sacred, (and that not as a Perſon, a Man or a Woman, but as a Perſon in ſuch a Relation, as a Husband or Wife) by the relation which he hath to that: So *Athanaſius* makes, or rather notes the Diſtinction.

The Deſign and Scope of the Apoſtle in the Text, is to ſatisfie a *Caſe of Conſcience*, which, it ſeemeth, had been propoſed to him; and was, Whether the Bond of Marriage contracted between Perſons, both at the Time of that Contraction, in a ſtate of Infidelity, were obliging afterward, if one of them became a Convert? Or, Whether the believing Husband were not obliged to put away the unbelieving Wife, and the believing Wife to leave her Husband that believed not; ſeeing the Apoſtle (for this likely was the Occaſion) had *adviſed* them in a former Epiſtle, not to keep company with Idolaters and prophane Perſons; and they comprehended not how *Then* a Believer, a Holy Perſon, could hold Com-

Communion in the Matrimonial State with an Unbeliever, who is an Idolater and unholy.

This was the *Case*; and to this the Apostle gives a plain and positive *Resolution*, Vers. 12, 13. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord; If any Brother hath a Wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away; and the Woman which hath an Husband that believeth not, if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.* Then he seconds the Resolution and Decision which he had made, with a *Reason* that doth expresly obviate the *Ground* and Foundation of their Scruple, and that in the former Part of the 14*th* Vers. *For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified in or by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified in or by the Husband.* In fine, he *Fortifies* that Reason by a further Consideration, taken from the Inconvenience and Absurdity that else would follow, if it should not be as he affirmed; and that in the latter Part of the 14*th* Vers. *Else your Children are* (or would be) *unclean; but now* (or whereas) *they are holy.*

The Sense *You* give of the Apostles *Reason*, (for of his *Resolution* and Decision I know no Controversie) is; "That the "Bond of Matrimony still remains: Reli-

" gion makes no Alteration in *Civil* Bonds
" and Contracts. The unbelieving Hus-
" band is as much clean or lawful, that is
" (*say you*) ſanctified to the Uſe of the be-
" lieving Wife; ſo that ſhe may now as
" freely admit his Converſation in a Conju-
" gal way, as ever before: And the like
" of the unbelieving Wife to the belie-
" ving Husband. For were it otherwiſe,
" your Children muſt be *Illegitimate*, and
" Baſtards; whereas they are not ſo, but
" *Lawfully Begotten*, and of clean Blood.

" For this Senſe, you argue from divers
" Conſiderations; *One* is, That the Holi-
" neſs of the unbelieving Parents muſt be of
" the *ſame Kind* with that of the Children,
" and that of the Children the ſame with
" that of the unbelieving Parents; and
" therefore, can be only *Civil*. Another;
" *That* the Apoſtle, when he ſaith, *The*
" *unbelieving Husband is ſanctified*, doth not
" ſay by the *Believing* Wife, but only by
" the *Wife*; and when the unbelieving
" Wife is ſanctified, he ſaith not by the
" *Believing* Husband, but only by the *Huſ-*
" *band*: Which ſheweth, that the Holi-
" neſs is only by the Conjugal *Relation*, as
" one is a Husband, the other a Wife; not
" as a believing Husband, or believing
" Wife. And the *Third* is, That in *Mal.*

" 2. 15.

" 2. 15. the word *Holy* is taken for Legi-
" timate and Lawful.

But for all this, the *Senſe* you give of the Apoſtle's Reaſon, can never be *His*, as being altogether incongruous, and improper to the words he uſes: For whereas the Apoſtle ſays, *The unbelieving Huſband is ſanctified in or by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified in or by the Husband*; inſtead of ſanctified *In* or *By*, you render it ſanctified *To*; both *Againſt* the common uſe of the Particle, and *Without* Example. For *Gal.* 1. 16. the Text you cite as Parallel, muſt be rendred (as it is in our Tranſlation) *In me*: It had been a *Solæciſme*, to have ſaid there, ἐν ἐμοὶ for *To me*; it muſt have been ἀποκαλύψαι ἐμοὶ, anſwerably to that *Matth* 16. 17. *Fleſh and Blood hath not revealed it to thee*, ἐκ ἀπεκάλυψέ σοι, not ἐν σοι. And for *Acts* 4. 12. the other (*non Parel*) Parallel you cite, ἐν ἀνθρώποις there, is not *To Men*, but *Among* Men; *No other Name is given among Men*: No other Name, no other Perſon among the Sons *of* Men; No Name among all their Names; not *Moſes*, not *Herod*, &c. is the Name or Perſon given of *God*, in and by which they can be ſaved; and yet if ἐν were uſed in conſtruction with *Any o-*

ther word for *To*, (as indeed I find it with ἐπιχορηγήσατε, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. of which see *Beza ad Loc.*) it would not follow, that it might be uſed in that Senſe with ἡγίασται, if you do not bring (as you do not) an *Example* of it. In the Senſe you carry it, ἡγίασται in the Text, ſhould have been conſtrued with either πρὸς or εἰς (not ἐν,) as it is *Heb.* 9. 13.

Again, How is the Unbeliever *Legitimated* in or by the Believer? Both are equal in reſpect of Conjugal Relation; one doth not legitimate another, but the *Law* of Nature or Nations legitimates them both to one another. But here, the Apoſtle ſaith, *The unbelieving Husband is ſanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified by the Husband*; and therefore, to be Sanctified, is not to be Legitimated. And obſerve, It is the *Unbeliever* is ſanctified by the *Believer*: He ſaith not, The Believer is ſanctified by the Unbeliever; whereas, if to be Sanctified be to be Legitimated, both are equally Sanctified by, or rather to one another.

But ſay you; "It is not ſaid by the A-
" poſtle, That the unbelieving Husband is
" ſanctified by the *Believing* Wife, nor
" that the unbelieving Wife is ſo by the
" *Believing* Husband: He ſaith, barely, *By*

" *the*

" *the Wife, and by the Husband*; not by " the believing Wife, and by the belie- " ving Husband. As *if* it were not plainly underſtood, when he ſaith of a Husband and Wife, of which it is ſuppoſed one is a Chriſtian, a Believer; the other not; That *the unbelieving Husband is ſanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified by the Husband.* Certainly, it is the Unbeliever is ſanctified by the Believer; eſpecially ſeeing this Wife, and this Huſband, *Verſ.* 15. is called the one a *Siſter*, the other a *Brother*: And alſo, that in ſome Copies, particularly that of *Claremont*, *Believing* is added, as *Beza* aſſures; and ſo *Tertullian* alſo, and *Athanaſius*, read it.

Again, in all the Scripture, the term *Sanctified* is never put for *Civilly Legitimated*; and you might as well have ſaid, it ſignifieth *Nothing*, as that it ſignifies but *That*: For as for *Mal.* 2. 15. the term *Holy* is not in the Text; for it is not there a Holy Seed, but a *Seed of God*, and that according to the Uſage of the *Hebrews*, who put the Name of *God* to what excels; as a Mountain of *God* for a High Mountain, an Army of *God* for a Great Army, a Lyon of *God* for a Lyon that excels in Strength or Stature; and ſo a Seed of *God* for an honourable excellent Seed; a Seed not baſely, promiſcuouſly

miſcuouſly or adulterouſly begotten; but according to the Law and Inſtitution of *God*, in lawful and orderly Matrimony: And if the Seed of *God* be an Honourable, Excellent, and Legitimate Seed, will it therefore follow, that the word *Holy* (a word the Prophet uſes not) doth ſignifie Lawful or Legitimate?

And whereas you ſay, ["The Seed of "*God* can be underſtood in no other Senſe, "but that of a *Lawful* Seed, in oppoſition "to *That* born in *Poligamy*; and ſo con-"clude againſt *Poligamy* from that Text:) I cannot but obſerve, that you will take for ſufficient *Evidence*, in ſome Points, *That* which is not currant even with you in others. For is not this an *Old-Teſtament* Text, as well as *Gen.* 17? and yet ſuffices to conclude againſt Poligamy, *Though* the latter muſt not for Baptiſm. And *tho'* more is to be ſaid againſt the Illation you make from the *One*, than can againſt *That* I make from the *Other*. For the *Seed of God*, in the Text, is not literally and directly oppoſed to the Iſſue born in *Any* Poligamy, but in *Adulterous* Poligamy; for words muſt be interpreted according to the Scope and Subject-matter: and the Deſign and Scope of the Prophet, is not to argue againſt Poligamy *as ſuch*, in which there may be no *Treachery*;

ry; but againſt Adulterous Poligamy, in which there always *Is*; it being founded in Treacherous putting away: Which is evident, in that the Prophet concludeth not againſt the *Former*, but the *Latter*; *Therefore, take heed to your Spirit; let none deal treacherouſly againſt the Wife of his Youth.* Deal treacherouſly! Wherein? In Poligamy as ſuch? No; but in the Divorce, then, commonly in Practice; which was, to put away one Wife to take another: or in (as I called it) Adulterous Poligamy, Poligamy founded on unjuſt *Divorce*: For ſaith he, *The Lord the God of* Iſrael, *he hateth putting away.* Plainly, the Treachery lay not barely in Poligamy, or the having many Wives; for to ſay it did, is great Impiety againſt the Father of the Faithful, and againſt the Generation of the Juſt: For did *Abraham* deal treacherouſly? or did *Jacob?* or did *David*, but in the Matter of *Uriah?* &c. Was the *Church*, the true Off-ſpring of *God*, founded in an Ungodly Seed? Were not the *Patriarchs* the Iſſue of Poligamy? Or can it be imagined, that the Father of the Faithful, the Man after *God*'s own Heart, and the Father of the Twelve *Patriarchs*, ſhould live and die in Treachery, Perjury, Adultery? And yet they did in Poligamy: No, the Treache-

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ry lay not ſimply in Poligamy, or having many Wives; but, as I ſaid, in *Adulterous Poligamy*, or the *Divorce* then in Practice, which was, the *Cruel putting away of one Wife, to take another:* For this, as *Chriſt* explains it, is *Adultery*; and conſequently, Treachery againſt the Divorced.

And if the *Concluſion* be againſt Divorce, that Divorce which was in Practice in that time, the *Medium* or Argument by which he doth deduce it, muſt be underſtood *Accordingly:* And what is the *Medium? God made One*, when the Remainder of the Spirit was with Him, and He could have made more: And why then but One, but that He might have an Excellent Seed; which, in direct and literal Correſpondence to the Concluſion, [*Therefore deal not treacherouſly, in putting away,*] muſt be *Thus* Interpreted: He made *One*; but One, that He might have an excellent Seed; not a baſe, diſhonourable Seed, the Iſſue of Adultery and treacherous Divorce; but an honourable, orderly Seed, according to his own Ordinance and Inſtitution of Marriage: And therefore, He made One; but One, that there being but One (All,) *Adam* might have no *Choice* of more, and conſequently might be uncapable of committing Treachery againſt *That One* he had,

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in putting her away to take *Another*.

This is plainly the Reaſoning of the *Prophet*. But though from this *Medium* he but argues, and ſo doth *Jeſus Chriſt* too, againſt *Adulterous Divorce*; yet ſeeing the ſame *Medium* may be uſed to more than one Concluſion, I do not lay any Imputation on your Argument againſt Poligamy, from the Prophet's, *That God made but One*; and conſequently, *Adam* could not have more than One: No, though it may be ſaid, That the Argument would hold as well againſt *Succeſſive*, as *Contemporal* Poligamy: For there being but one Woman (all) made, *Adam* could no more have one after another, than two at once: And though the Holy *Patriarchs* underſtood it not to be againſt Poligamy, which they practiſed; but againſt Adulterous Divorce, which they never practiſed.

I hope, you will not underſtand me here beſide my Intentions, to offer what I *Have* in favour of Poligamy: I know that from the Beginning it was not ſo; it could not be ſo; and that the Churches of *Chriſt* have no ſuch Cuſtom: I only offer it, to let you ſee, how *Juſt* you are to the *Old Teſtament*, and to Conſequences and Deductions in Matters in which you have no *Prejudice*; and again, how *Hard* in things in which

you

you have *Any*: Seeing a *Well-laid Conſequence* and Deduction, from an *Old-Teſtament* Text, ſhall render you Impregnable in *One Caſe*, againſt the Battery of many not unworthy Conſiderations; *But* ſhall not ſignifie a Button in *Another*, though the Conſiderations againſt *It* are in no Degree ſo numerous, or ſo weighty: As if *For* you, any Probability and Appearance muſt be Demonſtration; but *Againſt* you, even Demonſtrations as good as the Nature of the thing will bear, muſt not have the Reputation of being bare Probabilities. But This by the way. To return.

The Senſe I have of the Apoſtle's *Reſolution*, and of the *Reaſon* with which he enforces it, is, That notwithſtanding the Infidelity and Unbelief of one of the Conjugal Pair; (yet) the other might ſtill cohabit, and Conjugally converſe with him, or with her: For though the Perſon of the Unbeliever be not ſanctified; yet the Relation is, and the Matrimonial uſe is, and that in and by the Faith of the Believer; who, by a Dedication of himſelf, or of herſelf, and of all he doth, and all he uſeth, in receiving all, and doing all with giving of Thanks, and with a *Superior Reference*, doth thereby ſanctify, make different and holy, (namely, Relatively and Externally) what without

out that Dedication and Superiour Reference, was in it ſelf but *Common*, Indifferent, and Unclean: As 1 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4, 5. where mark the *Limitation*; *To him that Believeth*: and alſo the *Manner* how ſanctified; *By the Word and Prayer*.

And the Apoſtle enforceth this Reaſon; namely, the *Sanctification of the Unbeliever in and by the Believer*, as to Conjugal Acts and Uſes, by a further Conſideration, *viz.* That (there being the ſame Reaſon for the Unbelieving Parent, as for the Children that do not Actually believe) if it were not *So*, [If the Unbelieving Husband, as a Husband, were not ſanctified by the believing Wife, but remained *Common, &c.*] then their *Children* (which they would not eaſily grant) muſt be alſo common, and unclean, and as unholy as the Children of the meer *Heathen*; who, being Aliens to the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael*, Strangers to the Covenant of Promiſe, and ſo without *God* as in Covenant, *Can* do no Act in reference to him; that is, no Holy Action; and conſequently, tho' they might *Lawfully* (both by the Law of Nature, and the Law of Nations) beget *Children*, which therefore would be Legitimate; yet they could not do it *Holily*, and therefore their Children could not be Holy. A Heathen may do a thing

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Lawfully; but only a Christian can do a thing *Holily*: That is *Lawfully* done, which is done according to Law, Civil or Divine, Natural or Positive; but that only is *Holily* done, which being Lawful, is done with *Reference to God* in Covenant, and for his Glory. And as Children are called *Legitimate*, as they are lawfully begotten; so they are called *Holy*, as being Holily begotten. Thus it is, as if the Apostle had said, If the Unbelieving Husband be not Sanctified by the Believing Wife, and the Unbelieving Wife by the Husband that believeth; then are your Children still Unholy, still Unsanctified, and but as the Children of meer *Heathens*: For if your Children are Holy and *Sanctified*, (as you do acknowledge them) they be *So* but by the Dedication of the believing Parent by Word and Prayer, with a Relative and External Sanctity. And *Thus* the unbelieving Wife *May* be sanctified, and *Is* by the Husband that believeth; and *Thus* the unbelieving Husband is *Sanctified* by the believing Wife, as well as your Children: every Believer *Sanctifying*, Dedicating, and Consecrating all he hath Concern in or with, by Prayer applying the Word: *Else were your Children common and unclean; whereas now they are Holy. Designati Sanctitatis*, saith

saith *Tertullian*, the Candidates of Holiness. And thus the unbelieving Husband and Wife (as Husband and Wife) are holy, as the Children are holy, with a *Relative* and External Holiness, one and the *same* sort of Holiness.

And whereas you think, "That in the "Gospel-Administration there is no such "thing as a *Relative* and External *Holi-*"*ness*;] I on the contrary am apt to think, there was never *More*; and that the Ceremonial Holiness under the Law, did in a great degree but signifie the Latitude of *This* in the Gospel: For what is the *Holiness of* our Actions, Natural or Civil, and *of* the Members of our Bodies, and *That* which is *on* Creatures by *craving* a Blessing on *them*, *Other* than a *Reference* (in the doing of the Former, and in the using of the Latter) to the Glory of *God*? In this ἀναφορὰ εἰς Θεὸν, this Reference to *God* in *Actions*, in the use of *Creatures*, and the use of our *Members*, consists the *Sanctification* of *Them*, to *Which* in all things a Believer is obliged: For *Whether we do eat, or do drink, or what-ever we do, all must be done* (with this Reference to *God*,] *for the Glory of* God. Thus a Christian is a Person that is *Entirely* to *God*; that in all he *Is*, and *Hath*, and *Doth*, is *To*, and *For God*: He is a *Priest*, and he

is

is an *Offering*, and he is a *Temple* too: So that, now, Holineſs is on the Bells of the *Horſes*, and the *Pots* (Veſſels of common Uſe) are as the *Bowls* before the Altar; all Holy and Conſecrated. No Action of a Believer, much leſs his Marrying, and giving in Marriage, and the conſequent Actions of that State, muſt be common, but holy; and every Action of an Unbeliever, is common and unholy: *To the Pure all things are Pure, but to the Unbeliever nothing ſo:* Even the Lawful Actions of the Unbeliever, who is without *God* in the World, are unholy. Holy Chriſtian Matrimony, and holy Chriſtian Uſe of one another, differs much from Unholy and Unchriſtian. Infidels do *Lawfully* come together; but they do not *Holily:* They never think on *God* in Covenant in it.

Now, in your ſecond Thoughts, I pray conſider, which of the given Senſes is the moſt probable, either *That* which agreeth not to the Text, ſo much as in the Grammar; but is far fetcht, violent, and forced: or *That* which is not only Natural and Genuine, without Conſtraint and Violence to the words; but alſo agreeth both *to* the Analogy of Faith, and *to* the Deſign of the Apoſtle: As which not only reſolves the Caſe propoſed; but, by obviating the Ground of

of the Scruple, doth fully ſatisfie the Conſcience: A Senſe not mean and low, as that is which makes the Holineſs to be but Civil, (to be) a meer Lawfulneſs; but a High, Lofty, Spiritual, Evangelical Senſe: a Senſe truly worthy of our great Apoſtle, who breatheth nothing but Sanctity, nothing but Holineſs.

Thus having fortified my Premiſes, I ſhould immediately proceed to deduce my Concluſion; but (that) before I do ſo, it may not be amiſs to conſider one *Queſtion*; which is: [Why, *Seeing the Sign and Token of the Covenant of Promiſe, was the Sign and Token of it not only on* Abraham's *Part, to whom it was made; but on* God's, *who made it: Why, ſince it ſignified, that* God *did convey, and make Himſelf and all His to* Abraham, *as well as that* Abraham *ought to reſtipulate, and ſurrender, and make himſelf, and all his again to* God: *That all along I do mention but* This, *and not the* Other?]

To *This* I anſwer, That I inſiſt not on the *Latter*, to exclude the *Former*. I well know the Sign and Token of the Covenant, to be a Sign and Token between *God* and *Abraham*; and ſo as much ſignifie what *God* hath promiſed to *Abraham*, as what *Abraham* was obliged to anſwer. But the

Reaſon I inſiſt *mainly* on the *Latter*, is, That *It* ſeemeth moſtly (to be) imported in *Putting of the Sign upon Abraham:* For any other Sign that *God* had pleaſed to have given him, either in the Heavens above, or in the Earth below, might have been (as the Bow in the Clouds) a Confirmation of the Truth of *God*, as Covenanting: But it *Would not*, with ſo much Clearneſs and Significancy, have repreſented *Abraham*'s Stipulation, and his aſſigning and giving of himſelf and his again to *God*, *as Now* it doth; ſeeing (that) That in common Senſe is *God*'s, which hath his Sign upon it, and wears his Mark. And 'tis *as* obſervable, that as Circumciſion was upon *Abraham*, and on all his, in token of his Anſwer and Reſtipulation to *God*, (That he did dedicate and aſſign himſelf, and all he had, to him); ſo Baptiſm [the Evangelical, initiating Token] is on the Perſon *too* to whom *God* is a *God*, and ſignifieth the *ſame Reſtipulation* and Anſwer, which Circumciſion did: The *Which* many Learned (not improbably) conceive the Apoſtle means, when he ſays, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. That Baptiſm is *Not the putting away of the Filthineſs of the Fleſh, but the Anſwer or Reſtipulation of a good Conſcience towards God:* And ſo *Beza* (*ad loc.*) on ſecond Thoughts doth render it; and *Tertullian* happily

happily doth allude to it too, when *l. de Resur. Car.* he tells us, *Anima non Lavatione, sed Responsione sanctitur.* Besides, ἐπερώτημα is a Juridical word, as may be seen in the Glossary: And though (in Classick Authors) *It* primarily, and in the First place, do signifie *Interrogation*; yet even *thence*, it came in the Second to signifie *Stipulation*, (the Sense the Jurists take it in:) And the Reason is evident; for in *Spigelius*, *Stipulatio est firma verborum conceptio, quâ quis Aliquid se facturum daturumve promittit Alteri super hoc Ipsum* Interroganti; *utpote, promittis mihi te daturum xx Philippeos? Alter Respondebat, promitto.* And *Thus* also *Surrenders* and Deditions were antiently made, as is to be seen (in *Livy, l.* 1. *c.* 36. and in *Calepine, ad voc. ded.* out of him) in the Dedition of the Collatines to the *Romans*. But yet my Argument doth not stand and fall with the Sense of this Text, no more than with that in the 1 *Cor.* 7.

Well then, I have evinced, *That* the Covenant of Promise, which is the Blessing of *Abraham*, is the Covenant of Grace, and *That* it doth descend upon the (true) Believing *Gentiles*; I have also evinced, That all who have the Benefit and Advantage of the Blessing of *Abraham*, and are the Seed

on whom it doth descend, are equally obliged to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence arising from the Nature of that Blessing, or annexed to it, as *Abraham* himself: And I have evinced, That the Duty, Office, and Incumbence arising from the Blessing of *Abraham*, in the Covenant of Promise, was, in Restipulation and Answer to *God*, to dedicate, assign, and give himself, and all he owned, to Him; and, in token of that Dedication, Gift, and Assignment, to put the Sign and Token of the Covenant [the Mark and Cognizance of *God*] both on himself, and on them.

And now take my *Argument*, which is this: That *Seeing* the Believing *Gentiles* are the Seed of *Abraham*, and consequently are Partakers of his Blessing in that Covenant of Promise confirmed afore in *Christ*; as is evident in the first Particular: And *Seeing* the Seed of *Abraham*, who are Partakers of his Blessing, are under equal Obligation to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence of that Blessing, as *Abraham* himself was; which is the Second Particular: And *Seeing* also, That the Duty, Office, and Incumbence lying on *Abraham*, as he had the Blessing, was, that he should both dedicate, and assign, and give himself, and all his to *God*; and, in token of it, take himself,

ſelf, and put on them the Sign of the Covenant, (which is called to keep the Covenant, *viz.* in the Sign of it;) which is the Third. It *Follows*, That the true Believing *Gentiles*, who are the Seed of *Abraham*, and as much Partakers of the Bleſſing in the Covenant of Promiſe, as *Abraham* himſelf, are as much obliged to obſerve and keep that Covenant of Promiſe, in the Sign and Token of it, (be it what it will) as he himſelf, and his Natural Seed: That is, in plain words, Seeing *God* is as much a *God* to the Believing *Gentiles*, as he was to *Abraham*, and doth as much give and make himſelf, and all he hath to them, as he did to him; It follows, That they are as much obliged, by way of Anſwer, to dedicate and give themſelves, and all they have, to him; and, in token of it, to take the Sign of the Covenant between *God* and Them, or the Cognizance and Token of being *God*'s, (which *Now* is Baptiſm) upon *Themſelves*, and to put it upon all *Theirs*, [illegible], (and to be ſure, their Children are *Theirs*) as *Abraham* was *Himſelf* to take Circumciſion, (the Sign and Token of the Covenant *Then*) and to put it alſo on *His*. The ſame Reaſon for both; The *Seed* is as well to keep the Covenant (in the Sign,) as *Abraham*.

If it could be denied, that Baptism is now the Sign and Token of the Covenant of Grace, as Circumcision was heretofore; I should think it easie to be evinced: But I assume it as granted, and that both *Because* Baptism is the Restipulation and Answer of a good Conscience to *God*; and *Because* it hath the same Use now, that Circumcision had before, (*viz.*) To be the Rite of Matriculation, and of Assignation: And *Because* else (which is hard to think) there is now no such Sign and Token at all of the Covenant: Whereas if in Circumcision, [*God*'s Sign]; in Baptism, the Name of *God* is put upon us, to mark us for *His*. And taking it for granted, and allowing the Grounds that I have laid, you may see the Reason, why in the Primitive Times, *Whole Houses* were Baptized: It is on the same Account, and for the same Reason, that *Abraham*'s *Whole House* was Circumcized. Thus it is said, *Act.* 11. 14, That *Peter should tell Cornelius words, by which he and all his House should be saved*: And *Act.* 16. 15. it is said but of *Lydia*, that she believed; but of Her, and of her *Houshold*, that they were *Baptized*: And in *Act.* 16. 31. it is promised to the Gaoler, that on his Faith not only himself, but his *Houshold* should be saved; *Believe thou*

on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House. And 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. *Paul* Baptized the *Household* of *Stephanas:* And *Christ* himself tells *Zachæus*, on his believing, That Salvation is come not to his Person only, but his *House*. I say not, this is Demonstration; but it seemeth *something*, that (ordinarily) when the *Master*, on his believing, hath a Blessing given him, his *House* or Family should be joyned with him. Certainly, the Families of the *Seed* have the same Relation to them, that the Family and Household of *Abraham* had to him; and the Incumbence on the Seed, is the same as on *Abraham*; and the Priviledge the same.

And it seems to me, to answer exactly to the Sentiments of *Some*, concerning the Promise given to the Church under the *Messiah*, that *Magnificent One*; for so *Jer.* 30. 21. should be rendred, and not in the Plural, as we do read it: To the Letter, it is not their Nobles, as in our Translation; but *their Magnificent One*, or *their Noble One shall be of themselves, and their Governour shall proceed from the midst of them.*

Now say *They*, the Promise is, That *when* this Noble and Magnificent One, the *Shiloe* should come out of the Loyns of *Juda*, and take the Soveraign Government

and Power, and have the chief Administration of things in his own Hand; *Then*, in that Glorious and Evangelical Dispensation, *their Children should be as afore-time*; or to the Letter, *As of Old*; Their Children should be solemnly dedicated, and given up to *God*, and put into his Protection and Care; and, in token of it, be Baptized, as of old, in afore-time, they were Circumcized: Which, though it be not the proper Sense of that Text, (for *of Old* may look but to the *Time* of *David* and *Solomon*, as I am apt to think it doth, because the same word is *Neh.* 12. 46. used in Reference to *It*;) yet it is consonant enough to the Analogy of Faith.

For indeed, well may Children in the Gospel-Dispensation be said, in this Sense, to be as *afore-time*, and as of old; since though the *Jews* are cut off, the *Gentiles* (which believe) are grafted in upon the same *Stock*; not indeed upon the Legal *Branch*, but upon the *Root* Olive; which affordeth all the Nourishment that either the *Jews* had, or the *Gentiles* have: Which Root-Olive is the Covenant of Promise; that Covenant, that Promise, that was above Four hundred Years before the Law. Now, into that *State* of things, as the Covenant of Promise *Then* held it so long before

fore the Law, we believing *Gentiles*, the true Seed, are put: *Chriſt* himſelf affirming, That *Many ſhall come from the Eaſt, and from the Weſt, the North, and the South,* [and thoſe are the believing *Gentiles* from all Quarters,] *and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob:* He ſaith not with *Moſes*, and with *Elias*, by whom the Law came, and was explained; but with the *Fathers*, who received the Promiſe: They ſhall ſit with theſe in the Kingdom of Heaven, or Goſpel-Church, And in *That State* of things, when not the *Law*, but the *Goſpel* preached unto *Abraham*, did obtain; *God* was a *God* not only to the Father, but in and through the Father, and for his *Sake* to the Children, yea, to all the Family; and the Father of the Family did not only dedicate and give himſelf, but all *His*, his Children, and even his Servants, all his to *God*. And ſo it *is Now:* Our Children are *Thus*, as they were afore-time, or of old; elſe indeed our *Children were unclean, but now are they Holy*; they are *God*'s. The great *Miſtake* of *Antipedobaptiſts*, is, That they look not back but to the Law, when they ſhould (look back) a little further, even to the Time of the Promiſe, before the Law; a State of things for the long ſpace of four hundred and thirty

ty Years: For obſerve, in *Jer.* 31. from *Verſ.* 31 to 34. when *God* is pleaſed to promiſe to make a New Covenant, and conſequently to aboliſh and abrogate the Old, he maketh old *not that* Covenant made with *Abraham* four hundred and thirty Years before the Law; *but that* which was made with their Fathers, *In the Day he took them by the Hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt*; which was the Legal Covenant made on Mount *Sinai*. Certainly, the New Covenant, as ſtated in *Jeremy*, is a *Renovation* of *Abraham*'s, or of the Promiſe of the Spirit; *I will be their God, they ſhall be my People*; *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed*; *and Thou and thy Seed ſhalt keep my Covenant*: To keep *God*'s Covenant, is to be *God*'s.

As for *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*, thoſe two Figures, taking them as Figures, and as in the Allegory; ſo they repreſent not primarily and immediately, (as you apprehend them) the State of ſingle Perſons; as if the *Latter* ſhould repreſent the Perſons that truly, and to all intents and purpoſes, are Spiritual *Heirs* of the Promiſe; and the *Former*, thoſe that are only *ſo* Externally, and as they did deſcend (according to the Fleſh) from *Abraham*: For, if you mind it, this Diſtinction of *Seeds* did take no

place,

place, in the Antitype and Truth, before the Law, for all that long ſpace of above four hundred Years that did precede it. So that firſtly, they do not ſignifie ſingle Perſons, but *Peoples*: I ſay, *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac* are not primarily and immediately the Elect and Reprobate, (as Elect and Reprobate are commonly taken) but are *Jew* and *Gentile*: The Seed which is of the Law, and the Seed which is of the Faith of *Abraham*: According to *Rom.* 4. 16. there are Elect and Reprobate among both Seeds.

Yes, *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac* do ſignifie but Peoples; (namely,) *Iſhmael* ſignifies the *Jews*; who, being Deſcendants of *Abraham* according to the Fleſh, were under the Bondage of the Law; and ſo, in the Myſtery, were Children of *Hagar* the Bond-Woman, as *Iſhmael* was in the *Letter*: For *Hagar* anſwereth unto *Sinai*, where the Law was given: And *Iſaac* repreſents the believing *Gentiles*; who are no longer under the Bondage of the Law, but under the Grace of the Promiſe; and ſo, in the *Myſtery*, are the Children of *Sarah*, or of the Free Woman; as being the Children of the Faith of *Abraham*, as Others were of his Body. *Hagar* and *Sarah* are the *Two Covenants* and Diſpenſations, [*Sinai* and *Sion*;]

Sion;] and the *Jews* under the Law, and *Gentiles* under the Goſpel, are the *Children* of *Them*, or *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*. So that before the Law, no Diſtinction in the Anti-type or Myſtery of thoſe Two; for the Children could not be, before the Mothers were: And therefore, what is this to the State of the Promiſe four hundred and thirty Years before? Now, in the Goſpel being freed from the Law, we are put again into the *State* of the Promiſe, which was before; *Chriſt* the Seed, the Principal Object of the Promiſe, being now come. *I'le be a God to Thee, and thy Seed.*

Thus I have finiſhed my Argument: But happily, in Evaſion of it, (for it cannot be in Solution of, or Satisfaction to it) you will perſiſt to ſay, as you have already; "That the External *Adminiſtration* of the "Covenant now, being vaſtly *different* from "what it was in *Abraham*'s Time; there-"fore the Incumbence is *ſo* alſo: And that "therefore, though believing *Gentiles*, who "have the Benefit of *Abraham*'s Covenant, "and to whom it is made, are under equal "Obligation to that *Proper Duty* and *Ser-"vice*, which is *Now* required of them, as "*Abraham* was to *His*; yet it follows not, "that their Infant-Seed are under the ſame "Obligation, according to the Goſpel-In-"ſtitution,

" ſtitution, till put into the ſame Capacity " (by believing) with themſelves.

But how pertinently this is ſaid, I do not ſee: For to what Propoſition in my Argument can this your Anſwer be adjuſted and applied? Beſides, it goes upon a Miſtake much vaſter than the Difference between the External Adminiſtration of the Covenant in *Abraham*'s Time, and that in Ours: For I know no other Difference in reſpect of the Sign of it, but that Circumciſion then *Was* that Sign, and that Baptiſm *Is* now. Nor will any *Difference* in the External Adminiſtration, if it ſhould be much greater, make *Any* as to the Argument, from the Duty and Incumbence which I inſiſted upon, (which is, To keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, as *Abraham* did) for this Incumbence and Duty is not bottomed and grounded on the *Adminiſtration* of the Covenant, which is mutable, and doth differ; but on the *Subſtance* and Nature of it, which is immutable and everlaſtingly the ſame; [*I will be a* God *to Thee, and to thy Seed:*] And *God* being as much a *God* to the Seed of *Abraham*, as he was to *Abraham* himſelf; the Seed are as much obliged to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence ariſing and reſulting from his being ſo, as ever *Abraham* was.

Ay,

Ay, you will ſay; "The believing *Gentiles*, on whom the Bleſſing and Covenant of *Abraham* doth deſcend, are as much obliged to that *Proper Duty* and Service, which is *Now* required of them, as *Abraham* was to *His Then*; Yet it follows not, (I uſe your own words) that [*Their Infant-Seed are under the ſame Obligation, according to the Goſpel-Inſtitution, till put into the ſame Capacity (by believing) with themſelves.*] And indeed, it follows not, that the *Infant-Children* are under the ſame *Obligation*; for *They* are under *None*: The Obligation is not on the Children, which are but paſſive: But it follows well enough for the *Parents* that believe, that the ſame Obligation lies on *Them*, they being the true *Seed*, to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, both by taking of it upon themſelves, and by putting of it on their Children, that did of old upon *Abraham*, for himſelf and his. And *This* is the *Proper* Duty and Service required of them, as they are Partakers of the Bleſſing of *Abraham*. Nor are we to expect any *New* Commands in the Goſpel Diſpenſation, for Duties ſettled of *Old* on laſting and immutable Reaſons: The Obligation abides, if the Reaſon of the Precept abides; a Principle that is the Ground of the Apoſtle's

ſtle's Reaſoning, 1 *Cor.* 9. 8,9,10. And ſhall the Promiſe indeed abide, and not the Duty which ariſes from it? The Covenant abide, and not the Reſtipulation, without which it is not a Covenant? This you dare not ſay.

Ay, but you will tell me again; "Tho' "you do acknowledge, that the Proper "Duty and Incumbence ariſing from the "Covenant, hath an Eternal Obligation up- "on all the true Heirs of Promiſe; and in "particular, That ſuch are bound by way "of Reſtipulation, not only to aſſign, de- "dicate, and give themſelves to *God*; but "alſo, all that is Theirs: Yet that you "do mean, that it *Muſt only be in the way* "*that he himſelf hath appointed*, (and who, "I pray, ever meant otherwiſe?) and that "is (ſay you) but *by Prayer and Supplica-* "*tion for them*, and by *Educating* of them "(as far as they are capable) in the Nur- "ture and Admonition of the *Lord*; and "*Not* by the Parent's putting on them any "Sign of the Covenant, *as a Badge*, and "Cognizance of *God*, in Recognition and "Teſtimony of his Right and Title to "them.

But all this is but to deny the Concluſion, after Conceſſion of the Premiſes; for I have evinced, that the *Proper Obligation* of the

the Covenant, and in the way that *God* himſelf hath appointed, is, That thoſe with whom it is immediately made, and who are firſt Partakers of the Benefits of it, to whom *God* is firſtly and immediately a *God*, are not only to dedicate and give themſelves, and all they have to Him; but to do it in this *Particular way* & manner, by keeping of the Covenant in the Sign of it; [*I will be a* God *to Thee, and thy Seed; Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed:*] So that, to dedicate and give our Infant-Children to *God* by Prayer and Supplication, and to educate and bring them up in the Fear and Admonition of the *Lord*, (which alſo muſt be done, and which *Abraham* alſo did) is not to anſwer the Obligation and Incumbence of the Covenant, if we do not do it alſo *Solemnly*, by keeping of the Covenant in the Sign thereof our ſelves, and by putting of it alſo on *Them*. *God* loves *Solemnity*; it makes for his External Glory: He will be *Owned* to be our Lord and Owner, and the Lord and Owner of our Children, by our taking of his Name upon us our ſelves, and by putting of it on them.

And whereas you have ſaid, with a Modeſty as great as the Truth of what you ſay; "That, if my Argument be truly ſta-
"ted, and as (without wreſting) it ought,
"the

" the proper Language of it will be this;
" That *Abraham* being in Covenant, was
" to be Circumcized both himſelf and *Half*
" his Family; the ſame Covenant deſcends
" on believing *Gentiles*: Therefore, they
" are to be ſigned, and the *Whole* of theirs.
" But whether ſuch an Argument as this,
" (This being, you ſay, the *True State* of
" the Caſe) be convincing or no, you re-
" fer to my Second Thoughts.]

I anſwer: That I have Reaſon to be at the utmoſt Degree of Deſpair, of ever receiving of any good Anſwers from *You*, as long as (from what Cauſe I now enquire not) you underſtand an *Argument* no better: For *Mine* (even in *Your* Terms of *Half* and *Whole*) would run thus: If *Abraham*, and all his Seed, muſt keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, by taking it themſelves, and putting it on all theirs that are capable of it; Then, though *Abraham*, and but *Half* his Family, (for ſo you compute it) did keep it in the Sign thereof, as long as Circumciſion was that Sign; yet the Seed of *Abraham*, the true Believing *Gentile*, and the *Whole* of theirs, muſt keep it now. Now, that Baptiſm is the Sign, the Sequel is evident: For as but *Half* of *Abraham*'s Family was capable of Circumciſion,

the Sign of the Covenant *Then*; *All* the Off-spring of the Believing Seed of *Abraham*, are *Capable* of Baptiſm, which is the Sign of it *Now*. And obſerve it; I argue not from Circumciſion, as it is Circumciſion, to Baptiſm; but I argue, that becauſe the Children of *Abraham*, by vertue of the Covenant, were ſigned with the Sign of it; which then was Circumciſion: Therefore, the Children of the Seed, by vertue of the ſame Covenant, muſt be ſigned with the Sign of it too; which now is Baptiſm: For the Immediate Obligation is not to keep the Covenant either in Baptiſm, or in Circumciſion; but in the Sign of it: Now the Sign of *Old* was Circumciſion, and the Sign *Now* is Baptiſm. It is true, had it pleaſed *God* to have aboliſhed Circumciſion, the *Sign* before, and not to have inſtituted Baptiſm, which is the *Sign* now; it would have been a high Preſumption in any Perſon, to go about to make *One*: But when the Covenant remains, and the *Proper* Obligation of the Covenant, is to keep it in the *Sign* thereof; and *God*, though he hath taken away *One Sign*, yet hath pleaſed to Inſtitute *Another*; What can be plainer, than that as to be in Covenant is our Priviledge, ſo that to obſerve and keep it in the preſent *Sign* thereof is our Duty? Thus you

have

have my Second Thoughts, and make the most of them.

So much by way of Obviation to what you do object to my *Argument*. I am now to reply to *Yours*; and it is *ad Hominem*: (*viz.*) "Either the Children of Believers "are in Covenant with their Parents, or "they are not: If they are in Covenant, as "you say I affirm they are, because I said "the Children of Believers are Holy, not "without *God* in Covenant, but given to "*God* in Covenant; then say you, They "are the *Spiritual Seed*, and *as such* enti-"tuled to the Covenant and Blessing of *A-"braham*, which I formerly denied, and "which cannot be for fifteen Reasons. But "on the contrary, if I say the Children of "Believers are not the Spiritual Seed of "*Abraham*, and consequently such as are "not (*You should have added, On that Ac-"count,*) any wise intituled unto *Abra-"ham*'s Covenant and Blessing; then nei-"ther can they justly pretend to any Co-"venant Holiness by Vertue of their Birth "Priviledge; which yet [*You say, but "Mistakingly*] I make the Ground of their "Admission to Baptism, when I say, That "*God* becometh not related unto any; not "is any related unto *God* in Scripture, so "as to be stiled Holy, but in and through

"the Covenant.] Thus I am in a *Dilemma*, and driven from Corner to Corner; but safe in none.

But pray consider, that I never said, either directly or in consequence, That the *Children* of Believers are *Immediately* and firstly in the Covenant of Promise, and *as* their Parents (are:) I only said, and still do, that they are dedicated and given by their Parents to *God*, (who is) in Covenant (with those Parents:) And yet for all this, even in my Opinion, *They* may pretend [if that must be the word] to *Some* Holiness by vertue of the Covenant of Promise; and *This* too, though they be not *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed; For though they be not themselves the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*; yet *being* the Children of those that are, they become, *thereby*, intituled to the Priviledge of being *Dedicated* and Sacred to *God*, by vertue of the Covenant; in the *Same* Right, and all, as much as the Slaves and Natural Children of *Abraham* were. *Abraham*'s Natural Children and Slaves were intituled on *His* Account; and the Children of *Believers* are intituled on *Theirs*. The true Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are obliged to dedicate their Children, not as *His*, but as *Theirs*; they give *Theirs*, as he gave *His*. I pray, were not the Natural Seed

of

of *Abraham*, and his Slaves also, *some way Holy* in and through the *Covenant*, by vertue of the Dedication and Signing which *That* obliged to? And as *His* Children and Slaves were *some way* Holy, so are *Ours* also.

And in this Sense of *Federal* Holiness, as it is a *Relative* and External Holiness, do I ascribe it to our Children, in and through the Covenant; namely, as *This* obliges the Parent to assign and dedicate them, and they accordingly are dedicated: And to be Federally Holy in this Sense, they need not sure be the true Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, seeing All, even the Natural Children of *Abraham*, [though *so* Holy] were not all accounted for *Seed*. In fine; Observe, that if by vertue of the Dedication required of *Abraham* by the Covenant made with him, his Children were Members of the Church *Then*, [*Old-Testament-Church*, you call it] it will follow, that by vertue of the same *Covenant*, making the same Obligation and Incumbence of Dedication, (if *It* be still in force, as I have evinced it to be) the Children of the Seed continue Members *still*, even in the *New-Testament-Church*. And well they may, not only *for that* the Church is *One*, and the same, though the *Testaments*

be not; but for that Children were not only Members of the *Jewish* or Legal Church, but of the *Gospel-Church*, for above four hundred Years before the Law: For it was Gospel that was *Preached to Abraham*, Gal. 3. 8. And therefore Circumcision was, at first, a *Gospel-Sign*. And remember, I make not the *Childrens* being in Covenant, the *Ground* of *their* Baptism; but the Parents being in Covenant, the *Ground* of *Their* Holiness. To be Baptized is the Children's *Priviledge*; but it is the Parent's *Duty* to Baptize them, and to put the Name of *God* upon them, in token that by their Assignment they are His.

Well; "But you find not any *Mention* "of Infants-Baptism in the Apostolical and "Primitive Times; nor any positive and "literal Precept for it.] But do you find any mention, that the Apostles themselves, *All* of them were Baptized with *Any*, or *Any* of them with the *Baptism of Christ*? Or that Women were admitted to the Supper of the *Lord*? Or any positive literal Precept for either? And yet, I hope, you believe, both that the Apostles were Baptized, and that Women were not excluded from the Holy Communion. And if you

do

do not find in ſo many literal Expreſſions, that Infants were then Baptized, you may find it in ſufficient *Implication*; for you may find *Whole Houſes* (of which *Ordinarily* Infants are Conſtituent Parts) affirmed to be ſo, and that frequently, and without any *Exception* of Infants; *which* yet ought to have been made, if it had been but for *Caution*, on ſuppoſal that it were ſo dangerous a thing as you would have it be thought, to underſtand them included. Beſides, the Churches of *Chriſt univerſally* have had ſuch a Cuſtom, and for ought appears, *Perpetually*: Sure we are from Immemorial Time, which is enough to preſcribe from; and you cannot but know what *Auſtin* ſays in the Caſe.

Now, *Sir*, upon the whole I pray conſider, that in all the Scripture, as there is no expreſs and poſitive Text, that Children muſt be Baptized; ſo there is no expreſs and poſitive Text, that doth forbid their Baptizing: And therefore, it can be only conſequence to Evidence, either that they ought to be Baptized, or that they ought not. And let be weighed, *That Antipedobaptiſm* makes the Church of *Chriſt* but a Church *Unius Ætatis*: *That* it robs the

Parent of a ſenſible Ground of Hope for his Child, in caſe of Deceaſe in Infancy; which is, That he hath ſolemnly given him to *God*, and made him his Care: And *It* deprives the Child of a ſolemn and powerful Motive, when he is of Age, to dedicate and give himſelf: For this is a great One, [and this it deprives him of:] I am already ſolemnly given to *God* in Baptiſm by my Parents, who had Right to give me: I am *His* by their *Dedication*, and that publickly made and atteſted; and therefore, I have Reaſon to become *ſo* by my *Own*. I am not mine Own; the Name of *God* is upon me; I am marked for His; and I muſt rob *God* of what is His own *Already* by many Rights, and particularly by a Solemn Act of my Parents, if I now refuſe my Conſent, and do not alſo aſſign, and dedicate, and give my ſelf to Him.

And let it *alſo be weighed*, That Children are no more uncapable of Baptiſm, than they were of Circumciſion: For if Baptiſm be the Sign and Seal of the Righteouſneſs by Faith; ſo was Circumciſion: *If Then* all were not *Iſrael*, that were of *Iſrael*; ſo it is *Now*, all in *Chriſt* are not *Chriſt*: *If Then* Circumciſion,

ciſion, which was of the Fathers, or a Sign and Token of the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, were taken and put unto the Law; Baptiſm, which was of *John*, the laſt Prophet, and in uſe *before John*, as a Rite of *Initiating Proſelytes*, and adminiſtred both to Male and Female, *Is* taken by *Chriſt*, and put to the Goſpel: And *if* Faith be made in the Goſpel, the Ground and Foundation of Baptiſm, *Believe and be Baptized*; *It* was at firſt the Ground and Foundation of Circumciſion: For *Abraham believed* God, *and it was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs*; *and he received the Sign of Circumciſion, the Seal of the Righteouſneſs by Faith*; *which he had, being yet Uncircumcized.* And *if* the Children of *Abraham* were Holy, Ours are not Unclean.

In a word: As heretofore there were *Jews* outwardly, and but viſibly, as well as inwardly and really; ſo now there are Chriſtians outwardly, and but viſibly, as well as inwardly and really. And is not Baptiſm it ſelf, as external and viſible a Thing as Circumciſion? Yes, there is a *Baptiſm* and Regeneration of *Water*,

ter, which is external and visible, to make Christians visibly and externally, as well as one of *the Spirit*, which is Internal and Invisible, to make real and true Christians: The *Former*, that initiates into the External and Visible Church: The *Latter*, into the true Assembly of the First Born: And the Subjects of the Two Baptisms are no more to be confounded, than the Baptisms themselves.

Thus I have given you all the Satisfaction, that under a great variety of distractive and surprizing Accidents, I was capable of giving; and I have done it with the Temper and Moderation that becomes a Seeker of Truth; without the *Common Pomp* of Figures, Insolence, and Triumph: a *Thing* scarce pardonable in the Heat and Fervency of a *Dispute*; but which doth very ill become a *Writer*. And yet, if I had used any *Warmness* in the *Argument*, seeing it is in the Case of *Infants*, that cannot speak for themselves, it had been somewhat Excusable; and the rather, for that our Saviour was so Zealous for them Himself, that when *some* (it may be of your Perswasion) would not have had them brought unto Him to

be

be Blessed, it is said, He was much *Displeased* with *Them*. But I am not *so* with You, for that Occasion you have given of searching out the Truth to,

Bowdon, Septemb. 19. 81.
Jan. 27. 81.

Dear Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend and Servant,

R. B.

The

The Second Letter.

Dear Sir,

YOurs of *March* 16*th*, came to hand the 20*th*; in which the *Declaration* you begin with, That notwithſtanding all that I have ſaid, your Apprehenſions concerning the Matter in diſpute between us, are the ſame they were, and *That* rather you are the more confirmed; doth no whit ſurprize me. I aſſure you, I never had the vanity to hope, to convince a Man of your Perſwaſion. I was not the firſt Aggreſſor: I well knew the Confidence, that goes along with *Conceits* of higher Adminiſtrations; and I alſo knew, that ſome *Dyes* and Tinctures of Mind, (of which I took, and do take *That* of Yours to be *One*) are as uncapable of being waſhed out, as *Thoſe* in the Skins of Leopards and Blackamoors.

After

After a *Smoothing* Preface, you proceed to (as you call them) *Sober*, and (you hope) *Inoffensive Reflections*; which yet, to deserve the *Epithetes* you give them, must have been composed of Ethicks, as well as of Logick; must have been Reflections on Arguments only, without any squinting on Persons; and must have consisted of something else, than of Ambuscadoes of words, of bold Assertions without Proof, of Evasions in stead of direct Answers, of Partial Repetitions, and of Triumphs before the Victory. These are the *Arts* and Methods of *Imposture*, used to deceive the Vulgar; but very improper in Inquiries after Truth; and of no Influence, no Operation, in the least, on prudent and more Judicious Discerners.

Your First *Reflection is on the Caution which I gave you, about mis-improving my Concession*: And here, after all the Evasion, Circumlocution, and Wood of Words, in which you think to hide; it is certain still, that either those Pious and Learned *Men*, who prove the Baptism of Infants from their being the Seed of *Abraham*, do by the Seed of *Abraham* mean as you and I do, or they do not; and if they do not, as you do not, you dare not say but they *do not*; especially your *Presbyterian* Opponents, (of

which

which I would be principally understood;) Then should you raise a thousand times more Cloud and Dust than you have; yet still it would be visible, that all your *Fifteen Arguments* against Infants being the *Spiritual Seed* of *Abraham* in your Sense, and my *Concession* that they are not *so* in that *Sense*, do in no degree affect those Excellent and Worthy *Persons*: For *They* taking Spiritual Seed in one Sense, and You and I in another; *They* for Persons of a Religious *Consideration*, and some way Holy, and *You* and *I* for *Actual Believers*; though you may think you do oppose them, and also that I do; yet indeed you do not; nor I neither: for Opposition must be *Secundum Idem*. Ay! "But (say you) the Sense "in which *They* call Infants the Spiritual "Seed of *Abraham*, is a Sense the Scrip"ture knows nothing of. But, say I, Whether that be so or no, is still in question between *You*; and were it out of question, as you would have it, what were that to me, who neither did, nor do insist on that Argument? But in question it is, and like to be so for all that You, or any of Yours have hitherto said; nor are *They* without Scriptural Grounds. For are not the Children of Believing Parents *some ways Christ's*? And can they be *so*, and no ways

Abra-

Abraham's Seed? Can they be *Relatively* Holy, and Persons of a Religious Consideration, or Church-Members in the Gospel-Dispensation, (as the Reverend, most Acute, Learned, and Pious Mr. *Baxter* hath abundantly proved them,) can they be *so*, and no ways *Christ*'s? Are not the Children of *Christians*, as much Christians *Externally*; as the Children of the *Jews*, were *Jews Externally*? And are there not in *Christ*, Branches that do not bring forth Fruit? That is, Are there not *Reputed* Christians, which are *so* but by External Profession, and not by Actual Faith, and Internal, True, Spiritual Regeneration? Surely, all are not *Israel*, that are of *Israel*; All are not *Christ*, that are in *Christ*. I say not *This*, as willing to insist on that *Argument*; but to evidence, with how much Justice, as well as with how great Civility, you speak by occasion of *It*, of my *Darkning Counsel without Knowledge*: And, with a Candour truly yours, and much to the purpose, add; "That a Man may make "a Shift, 'tis true, by means of such a Di-"stinction, to avoid the Dint of his Ad-"versaries Argument, in his own Conceit "at least; but unless the Distinction be a "well-grounded Distinction he cannot pre-"tend so much to subserve the Truth, as

"his

" his own Credit thereby. A *Very Sober* and *Inoffensive Reflection!*

In your next, instead of *Admiration* how *Capable* comes in, you are greatly concerned that it should be thought you said, It must not be *in* in the *Major*; and therefore tell me, with some *Emotion*, " That " you shall only need to say, and which I " my self do know to be true, That you " did not at all *Admire* how *Capable* came " into my *Major* Proposition, *&c.* but how " into the *Conclusion.*] As if, had it been so indeed, it had been a Prodigy in Logick, to have a *Term* in the Conclusion, that had been in one of the Premises. But to answer in your own *Figure* of speaking: You cannot but know, that in the Place you Animadvert upon, and where I used the term *Capable*, I made no *Syllogism* at all; and so distinguished not the *Major*, the *Minor*, and the *Conclusion*; but only interpreted a Text, *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. Nor is the Argument I make, to be disposed into but *One*; it doth consist of *Many Syllogisms*: and what is a *Conclusion* in one Syllogism, may (I hope) be a *Major* Proposition in another.

But you proceed: " Whereas you tell " me, *(say you)* That my *Admiration* is " more the Object of Yours; after I have " gran-

" granted, that *God* commanded *Abraham*, " *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore,* " *thou and thy Seed*, in *General Terms*, " wherein *Both* Sexes may ſeem to be com- " prehended; you ſhould have added, to " have done well, [*As if I had not*] that " which follows alſo, That yet it is evi- " dent, that the *Males* only were to be *A-* " *ctually* ſigned: And therefore to ſay, " That the *Females* were *Vertually* and Re- " putatively ſigned, in the Circumciſion of " the *Males*, is not to the purpoſe; for " according to that Rule, the *Females* " ſhould be only *Virtually* and Reputa- " tively, not Actually *Baptized*. And in " this Reſpect therefore, to ſay as you " now do, That the putting of the Sign " on all thoſe in *Abraham*'s Family, that " were capable of it; and the wearing of " it by thoſe, may be [*I ſaid, muſt be*] " interpreted the putting of it on all; can " be of *no Advantage* at all, in the preſent " Diſpute.

In this Paragraph, I have again an ordinary *Inſtance* of your great *Candour*, and Sincerity, which will be very *Manifeſt*, when I have told you, That notwithſtanding a *Sly Inſinuation* to the contrary, I did *add*, and that in Terms ſufficiently expreſſive, more than once, that the *Males only were*

Actually signed, with Circumcision; or else, how could I argue as I did, and you grant I did, That the *Females* must be *understood* to be so *Reputatively*; For if the Females were signed but in *Reputation*, and Interpretation, the Males only could be *Actually* signed. And to confirm all I have now said, I need but *Repeat* the Argument I made before, which was as follows. [*But your* Admiration *is more the Object of mine: After you have granted, that* God *commanded* Abraham, (Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed) *in* General Terms; *wherein, say you,* Both Sexes *may seem to be comprehended, (and indeed, I say, are so:) For if he did command in* General Terms, *that* Abraham *and* All his (Seed, *you say*) *should keep the Covenant, in the* Sign *and Token of it; and yet, afterward, did Institute Circumcision to be* that *Sign and Token, which* [Mark this] *was not competent to All. How can the* Generality *of the Precept, (Thou shalt put the Sign on* All *Thine, when Circumcision, that is not competible to All,* [Mark that again] *is that Sign) be understood* Accommodously *and conveniently, as it must be, but thus; Thou shalt put the Sign on* All *thine that are* Capable *of it; and the wearing of it by* These, *shall be* interpreted *and understood*

the putting of it on All.] Thus, as *Now*, the *Gentiles* are *Counted* for Seed; so *Then*, the Females were *Counted* for signed. This was the *Sense* I gave, and This the Argument with which I urged it: If you approved not the Sense, why did you not reply to the Argument, and give a Sense more congruous? But if you do approve *It*, why, in your Answer, do you cloud and darken it with words, and make as if you disowned it as a False *One*? But a true Sense it is, you do not, you dare not deny it. Ay, but if true, you say, *It is not to the Purpose*. That, I grant, may be; not to *Your* Purpose, but sufficiently to *Mine*. "No, (say you) not to That neither; for then the Females should only "be reputatively Baptized, because they "were only reputatively Circumcized.] As if Females were not *Actually* to wear a Sign they are equally capable of with the Males, because they were but *Interpretatively* to wear a Sign they were not capable of but *so*.

Thus far I have followed you step by step, and written in a Fashion not mine own, but yours; both to make you sensible of the great Provokativeness, and of the as great Unfitness and Undecency of it. But I am weary of this *Drudgery*; and there-

fore, in what remains, resolve to content my self with summing up the Substance of what you offer; and that as well *without* improper Reflections, as *with* all the Clearness and Fulness I can; and so return my Answers.

The first thing offered by you of any moment, is to *This Sense*; "That the *Immediate Obligation* which was laid upon "*Abraham*, and his *Seed* after him in their "Generations, was *not* to keep the Covenant in the Sign of *It* in *General Terms*, "as I would have it; *but* only to keep "the Covenant in that *Particular Sign* of "Circumcision; there being (say you) no "other Sign mentioned or implied, but "that *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. in which the latter "words are only *Exegetical* of the former, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore*, &c. in the 9*th.* Verse; and *how* the "10*th.* explains, namely in *Circumcision*.

And seeing this Objection hath something in it very pertinent, (for I will do you all the Right imaginable) I hold my self obliged in order to the removing of it, and consequently to the further illustrating and clearing of my Argument, to shew; first, *That the* Immediate Obligation *and Incumbence mentioned in the* 9*th Verse, cannot be*

to

to keep the Covenant in, but Circumciſion; and conſequently, that what is ſaid Verſe the 10th, is not meerly Exegetical of the Obligation in the 9th. Secondly, *That the Immediate Obligation and Incumbence in the 9th. Verſe, is to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it; this is Primary: And then, that that which is added in the 10th. Verſe, is but a* Secondary *Inſtitution of a Particular Sign, for that time. And,* Thirdly, *I will ſhew, That there is a plain* Intimation, *and conſequently more than a meer hint, that ſome other Sign muſt be obſerved by the* Seed, *than that of Circumciſion.*

As for the Firſt; *That the Immediate, Primary Obligation and Incumbence, mentioned in the 9th. Verſe, cannot be to keep the Covenant in Circumciſion only; and conſequently, that the 10th. is not meerly Exegetical of the 9th. is evident:* For if the *Primary* and Immediate Obligation in the 9th. Verſe, were to keep the Covenant in *Circumciſion*, then the believing *Gentile* ſhou'd be as much obliged to keep the Covenant *ſo*, as the *Carnal Seed* and Deſcendants of *Abraham*; ſeeing *Thoſe* are equally at leaſt, if not more principally comprehended in the Seed, than *Theſe*. This is evident; for the *Subject* of the *Obligation* is, in all reſpects, the ſame with

That of the *Promiſe*. [In the *Promiſe* it is, *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between Me and Thee, and thy Seed after Thee, in their Generations*: and in the *Obligation* it is; *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations*: The ſame Subject in all reſpects in Both.] And therefore, ſeeing the Subject of the *Promiſe* is, at leaſt, as Comprehenſive of the Spiritual, as of the Carnal Seed, of the *Gentile* that believeth, as well as of the *Hebrews*; the *One* is no more to be exempted and diſcharged from the *Duty* and *Obligation*, than the *Other*: and if *Circumciſion* be that Duty and Obligation, *Both* are equally bound to ſubmit to *That*. All the Seed is in the *Obligation*, as much as in the *Promiſe*, the ſame words to expreſs it; and, I hope, you will not diſtinguiſh, nor limit, where the Scripture doth not.

And if the *Primary* and *Immediate Obligation* of the Covenant cannot be (as you may ſee it cannot) to keep it in, *but Circumciſion*; it follows, that *It is to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, in general Terms; and then, afterward, in Circumciſion, to begin with, as the firſt Sign*: So that, This muſt be the *Senſe* of the Text: I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between Me and Thee,

Thee, and thy Seed; and therefore, Thou and thy Seed ſhall keep my Covenant, in the Sign of it: and that Sign at firſt, and for the time being, the preſent Diſpenſation among *Thoſe* that ſhall deſcend from Thee according to the Fleſh, or be adjoyned to *them*, ſhall be Circumciſion. This is a fair, a plain, and eaſie, and natural Senſe; a Senſe, which no Exception from the Words themſelves can lie againſt: and therefore, a Senſe as much to be preferred before Yours, as that which *is Convenient*, ought to be before that which is *Not*. And This I evidenced in my former *Letter*, from the very *Grammar* of the Text.

But beſides what I have ſaid in my former *Letter*, in demonſtration of the *Senſe* given; that which doth abundantly confirm it to be the *True*, is, That the *Limitation* of the Subjects in the *Particular* Obligation to Circumciſion, *ver.* 10, 11. is very *different* from *That* in the *General* Obligation, *ver.* 9. For whereas it was ſaid *Verſ.* the 9th, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations*; when he comes in the 10th. to inſtitute Circumciſion, he ſaith not, *This is my Covenant, which thou ſhalt keep, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations:*

But, *This is my Covenant, which you* (You) *ſhall keep between Me and You, and thy Seed after thee:* And the being of it a Sign and Token, is reſtrained alſo; *And it ſhall be a Token or Sign of the Covenant between Me and You:* A Sign for this Time, and People, and Adminiſtration. He ſaith not, for *You*, and for thy *Seed* after thee. If you ſay, I am too *Critical*; I ſay, This is a Text that muſt be underſtood *Critically*: The Apoſtle was as Critical upon it as I, or any Man can be, when he obſerved, it is ſaid *Seed*, as ſpeaking of one, and not *Seeds*: and what he ſaith, is the proper *Key* to unlock the Text.

And yet, in regard the Text hath been Interpreted by very few in this manner, to add ſome more Illumination to the Senſe I make of it, I propoſe to be conſidered, that not only other Scriptures, but even this Scripture doth make *Diſtinction* between the *Family of Abraham that then was*, which in the Miſtery repreſented all his *Carnal Deſcendants*, (between that) and the *Children of the Promiſe*, which were afterwards to be; which were ſignified by the *Seed*, and afterward were typed in *Iſaac* the Son of the Promiſe; it being ſaid, *In Iſaac* (not in *Iſhmael*, who then was) *ſhall thy Seed be called.* Now, though *God* had ſaid in the

9th. *Verſe*,

9th. *Verſe, Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore*; that is, thou ſhalt keep the *Sign* of my Covenant; *Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations*; to ſignifie, that the *Children of the Promiſe* were obliged to that Duty and Incumbence ariſing from the Covenant, as well as the *Children of the Fleſh*: Yet, when he comes to inſtitute Circumciſion in *Particular*, he ſaith of it indeed, *This is my Covenant*; or, This is the Sign of my Covenant: But he ſaith not, This is my Covenant, which Thou, Thou and *Thy Seed* after thee, in their Generations, ſhall keep; but which *You* (You) ſhall keep: *You* to whom I ſpeak. Thou *Abraham*, and thy *Natural Houſhold* and Family *Here*; it is *You*, (You) and not the *Seed*, the Spiritual Seed: for *Iſaac*, in whom the Seed is called, was not there, he was yet unborn. It is *You*, (He ſpeaks to thoſe preſent;) Thou *Abraham*, and thy Natural Houſhold and Family; this is the Sign of my Covenant, which *You* (You) ſhall keep, as a Sign of that Covenant which I have made between *Me and You, and thy Seed after thee*. *Me* and *You*; thee *Abraham*, and thy *Natural Houſhold* and Family here, between Me and You, and thy *Seed* after thee; that Seed, which ſhall be called in *Iſaac*, thy *Spiritual Houſhold* and Seed.

Seed. And what was the *Covenant*, or Sign of the Covenant, which *They* (and not the Seed) were to keep then? What? No other Covenant or Sign, than that of Circumcision? *This is my Covenant, which you shall keep; Every Man-Child among you* (not among the *Seed*, but among *You*) *shall be Circumcized; and you shall Circumcize the Flesh of your Fore-skin:* [*You* still, not the *Seed*.] And what was Circumcision for? It was for a *Sign* and Token of the Covenant; and to *Whom* it was to be so, is clearly implied in the *Limitation*: It *shall be* a Token, a Sign of *the Covenant between Me and You.* Not Me and You, and thy Seed after thee. It shall be a Sign and Token of the Covenant, in the Dispensation of it, which *now is* between Me and You; not in the Dispensation of it, which *shall be* between Me and thy Seed: It shall be a Token of my Covenant, as it is between Me and You; thee *Abraham*, and thy Natural Houshold and Family: But not as it is to be transacted between Me, and thy Spiritual Seed.

If you say, (for I will say for you all I can imagine possible to be said, with any Colour) "That the Sense should rather "be this; *This is my Covenant, which you* "*shall keep*: That is, which *Thou Abra-*

"*ham*,

" *ham*, and thy *Seed* after thee, in their " Generations, ſhall keep: *And this* " *ſhall be a Sign and Token between Me* " *and You*; that is, between Me and Thee, " and *Thy Seed* after *Thee*, in their Gene- " rations.] If you ſay, This is the *Senſe* of the *Text*, I muſt be plain to tell you, It cannot be ſo; and that becauſe he doth ſo plainly diſtinguiſh in *It*, between *You* and the *Seed*: *This is the Covenant, which you ſhall keep between Me and You, and thy Seed after thee.* So that *You*, which is ſo plainly *Contradiſtinguiſhed* and oppoſed to the *Seed*, cannot poſſibly be underſtood to comprehend *It*. And it is alſo conſiderable, that he ſaith, *This is my Covenant, which you ſhall keep between Me and You, and thy Seed*; not *Between Me and Thee, and thy Seed*: And yet it doth refer to *Verſe* the 9th. where it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant, Thou and thy Seed*. But here, *You* is put inſtead of *Thou*, to ſignifie that *Thou* in the 9th. *Verſe*, muſt be underſtood of *Abraham* not *Perſonally* only, but *Collectively*; *Abraham* ſtanding there for Himſelf, and his Natural Family: *Thou*, and thy *Seed*, is *Abraham* and *Chriſt*; *Both* in the Myſtery.

This laſt Conſideration minds me of the Third Particular to be demonſtrated; which is, That *Another Sign beſides that of Circumciſion*,

cumciſion, is clearly intimated in the Text we diſcourſe on, as a thing that ſhould be afterwards. And this is manifeſt; for whereas he had ſaid, *That* the *Seed*, as well as *Abraham*, (and under *Abraham* I have proved the Natural Off-ſpring and Family of *Abraham* comprehended,) was to keep the Covenant in the Sign, or to keep the Sign of the Covenant, in the 9*th. Verſe*; and he inſtituted Circumciſion, but to be a Sign between *Him* and *Abraham*, and *Abraham*'s Natural Off-ſpring and *Family*; and to be kept but by *Them*, and not by the Spiritual *Seed*: [*This is the Sign of the Covenant, which you* (not which *Thou* and thy *Seed*) *ſhall keep*; *and it ſhall be a Token of my Covenant*, [as] *between Me and You*; not [*as*] between Me and Thee, and thy *Seed* after thee.] What remaineth, I ſay, *ſeeing* the *Seed* is equally obliged as well as *Abraham*, to keep the Covenant in *ſome* Sign, as was proved before; *and that* it was not to keep it in the Sign of *Circumciſion*, as is evident *Now*; what remaineth, but that there is ſome *other* Sign, in which *It* was to keep it, that ſhould be a Token of the Covenant in that *Adminiſtration* of it, which ſhould be afterward between *God* and the *Seed*; as Circumciſion was of the ſame Covenant, but in the Diſ-

penſation

penſation and Tranſaction of it, then, between *God* and *Abraham*'s Perſon, and Natural Houſhold? Circumciſion was the Token of the Covenant, as adminiſtred between *God* and *Abraham*; and Baptiſm the Token of the ſame Covenant, as adminiſtred between *God* and the *Seed*: If *Abraham* was Circumcized, *Chriſt* was Baptized.

Upon the whole; Let us now review the *Text*, and ſee it in the entire Senſe: And thus I *Paraphraſe* it. I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between *Me* and *Thee*, and thy *Seed* after thee, in their Generations, for an Everlaſting Covenant, *&c.* And therefore *Thou*, Thou and thy *Seed* after thee, in their Generations, ſhall *keep* the *Sign* of my Covenant: And *This* is the *Sign* of my Covenant, [That my Covenant, which is between *Me*, on the *One Part*, and YOU, thou *Abraham*, and thy Natural Family and Houſhold, on the *Other Part*; and thy *Seed* after thee, on the *Third Part*.] I ſay, This is the *Sign* that YOU, for your part, ſhall keep as a Sign of this Covenant, which is between *Me* and YOU, and thy *Seed* after thee; *Every Man-Child among* You *ſhall be Circumcized*; *and* You *ſhall Circumcize the Fleſh of* Your *Fore-skin*. And this *Circumciſion* ſhall be a *Special* and Particular Sign

Sign and Token of the Covenant, *as* it is between *Me* and YOU; between Me and Thee, *Abraham*, and thy Natural Houſhold. But as for the *Seed*, no mention of *It*, when he ſaith, *This ſhall be a Sign of the Covenant*, &c. which ſufficiently impleth another Adminiſtration to be with *That* afterward.

And I pray you mark, that where he calleth Circumciſion the *Covenant*, Verſ. 10. he ſaith, You *ſhall keep it between Me and* You, *and thy Seed*; becauſe the *Covenant* (of which Circumciſion was a *Sign*) was a Covenant between *God*, and the *Seed* too, as well as between *God* and *Abraham*, and his Natural Family. But when he ſaith expreſly, It ſhall be a *Sign* and Token, then he *reſtrains* it; *It ſhall be a Sign of the Covenant between Me and* You: Implying, that though the Covenant be alſo with the *Seed*, and Circumciſion was a Sign of that Covenant; yet it was ſpecially and particularly a Sign of it, as tranſacted between *God* and *Abraham*'s Natural Perſon and Family; and ſo a ſpecial and particular Sign of that *Oeconomy* in the Natural Houſhold. *It ſhall be a Sign between Me and* You; [and *not* between Me and You, and thy *Seed*.] And ſo much for the Firſt Objection.

What

What you *next* offer in Objection to my Argument, is; "That it follows not, that "because the Substance of the Covenant on "*God*'s Part, is Immutably and *Unchange-* "*ably* the *same*, (that) therefore the Du- "ty and Incumbence is also *so* on ours: "For seeing *God* hath Absolute Soveraign- "ty in and over all his Creatures, and "hath unlimited and boundless Right, as "to command, so to suspend and alter the "Instances and Duties of their Obedience, "both as and when he pleases; that may "be the *Duty* of his People at one time, [You should have added, to make it per- tinent; *By vertue of the same Covenant and Edict, and in the same Respect,*] "which "is not so at another. This you *Confirm*; "because else, you see not how it should "come to pass, that for at least two thou- "sand Years before the Time of *Abra-* "*ham*, no such Duty or Incumbence did "lie on the Patriarchs; particularly, not "on *Adam*, on *Abel*, on *Enoch*, on *Noah*, "or on the other *Antediluvian Fathers*; of "whom we do not read, that any of them "were *Signed*, or that they were obliged "to any Sign; though you say, *It cannot* "be denied, that they *were in the Covenant* "*of Grace*, and saved by *It* as much as *A-* "*braham* himself, or any of His. So that

"here

"here is an *Objection*, and an Enforcement "and *Confirmation* of that Objection.

As to the Objection, *(viz.) That it will not follow*, (that) *because the Subſtance of the Covenant, on* God's *Part, is immutably and everlaſtingly the ſame; therefore the Duty and Incumbence on ours, is alſo ſuch:* I anſwer. It will follow *well enough*, if the Duty and Incumbence on our Part, be founded on the *Subſtance* of the Covenant, which is on *God's* (Part,) as the Duty and Incumbence in diſpute between us *is:* It being, *I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between Me and Thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, for an Everlaſting Covenant, to be a* God *to thee, and to thy Seed after thee,* &c. *And* God *ſaid unto* Abraham, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations.* For though Almighty *God* be abſolute Soveraign over all our Perſons, and alſo over all his own Tranſactions and Methods, ſo as he may make at one time to be our Duty, that which he doth not another; and may tranſact and deal in way of Covenant with ſome, when yet he hath not pleas'd to do ſo with others: Yet if at any time, or with any Perſons, he pleaſes to tranſact in way of Covenant, and to confirm that Tranſaction by his Word and

Oath,

Oath, the two immutable things in which it is impoſſible that he ſhould Lye, and alſo to bottom the Duty and Incumbence to which he doth oblige by vertue of that *Covenant*, on *that* which is unchangably and immutably confirmed in *it*; We can no more, without a Blaſphemous Imputation to him of Inconſtancy and Weakneſs, introduce him making an Alteration in the *Duty*, than in the *Promiſe* it ſelf; ſeeing the *Obligation* to the Duty, is a neceſſary reſult and emanation of the Reaſon of it, and conſequently, is *uncapable* of being changed without a change of the Covenant, the unchangable Promiſe of God to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, is the *Foundation* of the Duty lying on *Abraham* and on his Seed; and the ſame Covenant as the ſame, muſt alwayes have the ſame effects, and make the ſame Duties.

Ay? but then how came it to paſs that *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, and others the moſt Antient Fathers, who were under the Covenant of Grace as well as *Abraham* and his deſcendants, God being a God to them as well as to him, did not keep the Covenant in the ſign thereof, if the Duty to keep the Covenant in the ſign thereof be Everlaſtingly the ſame, and of an unchangable nature? This is your *Confirmation*.

But to manifest the Invalidity of all is said by way of Confirmation, I need but to demonstrate, *First*; *That though all the* Fathers *were saved on the account of Jesus Christ, and by vertue of the* Eternal Compact *and Agreement between God and him, he being the Everlasting Father*; *yet* (*contrary to what you do suppose*) *it did not please God, at least not in the* Account of the Scripture, *to Transact with* all, *or* any *of* them, *in way of* Covenant *for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation*, before *he did so with* Abraham. *Secondly*, That *if he had been pleased to transact, with all or any of* them *in way of* Covenant *for those ends*; *yet* that *Transaction could not be the* Covenant *of* Abraham; *and therefore seeing the believing* Gentiles *do not claim the Inheritance, Eternal Life and Salvation* from *by and under* Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, *or any other* Covenanted Person *or Persons* before Abraham (*if there were any such*) *but only from, by, and under* Abraham, *nor by vertue of any* other Covenant *whatever, made with all or any of them, but only by vertue of* Abrahams; *It is certain that the* Termes, *which it pleased God to go upon with* them *in any transaction he had with them* (*be they what they will*) are, in *account of* Scripture, *as* Little *to us, as* those *he*

went

went upon with Abraham *are* much. And *Thirdly*, That *the* Obligation *to keep the Covenant*, Gen. 17. *in the sign thereof, though it were not, and indeed could not be observed by all or any of the Antients before* Abraham, *yet notwithstanding, that* it *is in a* Scriptural *sence, and consequently, properly enough, called a Duty and Obligation of* immutable *and unchangable nature, and Everlastingly the same.*

The first Proposition, (viz.) *That though all that ever were saved, were saved by vertue of the Atonement and Propitiation made by the Blessed Jesus,* He *being in the efficacy and vertue of his Merits and Passion, the Lamb slain even from the Foundation of the World*; *yet, that*, at least in the Account of Holy Scripture, *it did not please God to transact with all, or any of the antient, either the Antediluvian or Postdiluvian Fathers, in way of* Covenant *for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation before* Abraham, is a manifest Verity. For *though* all the *Fathers* that were *saved*, were so by some degree and kind of Faith; and were *so* by Jesus Christ, and through the *Eternal Covenant* (as Divines call it) of Redemption between God and him; and *though they* all did worship and honour God in way of *Sacrifices*, in all *which* the Blessed Jesus, the

true Lamb of God, was figured and repreſented; and *though* Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſaith, before *Abraham* was, I am, yet, *that* it pleaſed God to tranſact with *all*, or any, or either of them, before *Abraham* in way of Covenant or Promiſe for Eternal Life, and Salvation, or, *that* Jeſus Chriſt was Preached to them, or otherwiſe exhibited then in Types and Figures, (which we are not told they underſtood.) is *no where* ſaid or recorded, or ſo much as hinted in the *whole Scripture*. Our Saviour ſaith indeed, that *Abraham* did ſee his day, but he ſaith not, nor do the Scriptures ſay that *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, &c. ſaw it. What might be Preached by the *Spirit*, further then the *Scriptures* tell us, and then the Holy Ghoſt is pleaſed in *them* to Reveal to us, is no proper ſubject for our now Inquiry; We are now to mind but what is Preached by the Scriptures, and Recorded in them; Remembring, that the very *ſilence* of the Scriptures is Myſtical, as is evident in the caſe of *Melchizedeck*, who though (whatever Learned *Cunæus* thought) he were a Man, and conſequently was not, really, *without* Father, without Mother, without Genealogy, without beginning of dayes or end of Life; yet for great ends, (he) is taken and expreſly ſaid to be *ſo*;

and

and that, becauſe nothing, in the Leaſt, is written and recorded in the Holy Scriptures touching him, as to theſe particulars. And ſhew me any Scripture that but hints a *Covenant* made with *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, with all, or any of the Antient Fathers before *Abraham*, or Promiſe made to them, or any of them, of Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation, wherein Almighty God did paſs *his word* to be a God to them, or either of them, and their, or either of their Seed after them. I do not doubt but God was a God to them all, as I doubt not that *Melchiſedeck* had a Father, Mother, Genealogy, beginning of dayes, and end of Life, but as the Holy Scriptures do no where mention any of *theſe* in Relation to *Melchiſedeck*, ſo they no where intimate that God before *Abraham*, was a God to any of the *Antient Fathers*, in a way of *Covenant* or promiſe for Grace, Eternal Life or Salvation, and therefore, the leaſt that can be ſaid, if we ſhould be prevailed to acknowledge any ſuch tranſaction, muſt be (ſeeing the Scripture is ſo deeply ſilent in it) that as there is a *miſtery* in the ſilence of the Scripture touching *Melchiſedeck*, ſo there is a Myſtery in the ſilence of it touching any ſuch Covenant or Promiſe (if any ſuch were) to the Fathers; and that as *Mel-*

chiſedeck, to be a *figure* of the Eternal Prieſt, muſt be brought in in Scripture as a man dropt out of the Clouds, without any mention of Father, Mother, *&c.* So likewiſe, to the end that *Abraham* might be according to the Scriptures, what in the Divine Council he was appointed and ſet up to be, namely, the *Father* of all the faithful, or expreſs Believers in Chriſt, there muſt be no record in the Sacred Scriptures of any Promiſe of Chriſt before, as made to any other; or of any Explicit belief and Faith in him before. for had there been either, how could *Abraham* poſſibly be underſtood, in the account of the Scriptures, to have been the Father, and ſo the firſt of all the faithful, of all Believers in Chriſt? He only is firſt before whom no other is. Chriſt (I deny not) *may* have been Preached *before Abraham*, and alſo promiſed by the *Spirit*, but he is not *Revealed in the Scriptures* ſo to have been either Preached, or Promiſed: The Scripture is entirely ſilent as to any ſuch Tranſaction; If any ſuch Covenant or Promiſe were of Chriſt before, certainly in the account of Scripture it is as none, and ſo muſt be looked on of us as none; not the leaſt impreſſion or footſtep of any ſuch concern appearing. I acknowledge the old Fathers

to *be said* to have had *faith in God*, but they are not said to have had any *in Christ*, and these Faiths are so distinguished, that they may be Actually divided; *you believe in God*, sayes Christ, *believe also in me*; The *Old Fathers* did believe *in God*, they believed both *that* God *was*, and *that* he was a *Rewarder*, but *Abraham* did not only believe (as they did) *in God*, but he also believed *in Christ*. If you ask me, but is not God now a Rewarder in and through Christ, and not otherwise? I answer yes, and yet it is possible, they might believe in God, and not believe in Christ; They might believe God to be a *Rewarder* (as some Heathen do,) though they did not know him, and therefore could not believe him to be *so* but in Christ: That God is, and is a Rewarder, are Points of *Natural Religion*; But that Christ is, and God a Rewarder in Him, are Points of *Revelation*.

I acknowledge that what you say is commonly taken for granted, (viz.) "*That the Promise of Christ the Seed of the Woman, was made to* Adam;] And so much is true, that *Jesus Christ* is introduced by the Psalmist, as speaking of *himself*, and saying, that in the Volume of the Book, or (as some do render it) in the Head of the book

it is written of *him*, and ſo (though happily the Pſalmiſt may have *Aſpect* upon ſomething elſe) I grant it *is*, Gen. 3. 15. for when it is there ſaid, that *the Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpents head*, &c. It muſt I confeſs be underſtood of Chriſt, at leaſt in the Myſtery, thus it is written of him, but that Chriſt was promiſed to *Adam*, is not written; For what is written in the Volume, or in the head of the Book concerning Chriſt, is not written there, as ſpoken by way of *Promiſe* to *Adam*, but by way of *denunciation* to the Serpent, and is part of the *Sentence* pronounced on him; which if indeed it were *within the hearing* of *Adam*, yet the Scripture doth not ſay it was *ſo*; So little doth the Scripture concern *Adam* in that Tranſaction, how great concern ſoever, in reality, he was to have in it. So the Text, Gen. 3. 14, 15. *And the Lord God ſaid to the* Serpent, &c. What he ſayes to *Adam* is verſe 17. 18, 19. and of a very different nature. A declaration, I acknowledge, there is of Chriſt, from the beginning; but in the Record of the Scripture, that declaration is not noted as a tranſaction between God and *Adam*, by way of Covenant or Promiſe; All is ſaid concerning it, is in what did paſs between God and the Serpent, and ſome

ad loc. chuſe to call it a *Prophecy*, not a *Promiſe* of Chriſt.

And *it* adds no little *confirmation* to the truth of what I have now diſcourſed, *that* after the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt in what paſſed between God and the Serpent, we have not for the long ſpace of above Two Thouſand Years the leaſt Intimation in all the Scriptures, that any of the Fathers of that time had heard of that Revelation; (I do not ſay they had not heard, but I ſay the Scriptures do not ſo much as hint they had;) and though the Scriptures tell us, that in that time *Righteouſneſs* was preached by the *Spirit*, yet they do not in the leaſt tell us, that *Chriſt* was preached by it. And ſurely, had the declaration made concerning Chriſt in the Third of Geneſis been, in the Account of the Scriptures, a Covenant or Promiſe of him to *Adam*, &c. I ſhould much admire that the Apoſtle would inſiſt ſo highly (as he doth) on the being of the Promiſe of Salvation by Chriſt for but ſome *hundreds* of years before the Law, when had this been ſo, he might have inſiſted on *thouſands*; and the Apoſtle Peter *dates* the Covenant of Grace from *Abraham*, Act. 2. 25, 26. and before him, the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal 105. 8, 9, 42.

But

But secondly, on *supposal that it had pleased God to transact with* Adam, *or any of the old Fathers before* Abraham, *in way of Covenant and Promise for grace, Eternal Life and Salvation; yet that Covenant and Promise could not be the Covenant of* Abraham, *in which it pleased God to Promise to be a God to him particularly, and to his Seed after him*; For the Covenant of *Abraham* could not be before *Abraham* himself existed: And therefore, seeing the believing Gentiles do not claim Eternal Life and Salvation from, by, and under *Adam*, or any other of the Antient *Fathers* before *Abraham*; nor by vertue of any *Covenant Transaction* that hath passed between God and *them*, or any of *them*, but only from, by, and under *Abraham*, by vertue of the Covenant of *Promise* made with him; It is as clear that the *Termes*, Conditions and Methods on and in which it pleased God to transact with all, or any of those old Fathers, (be those termes and methods any whatever) (*they*) are nothing to *us*, as that the *Termes*, Conditions and Methods he is pleased to transact upon with *Abraham* in the Covenant of Promise, are all in all to us. That is, in plain English, That it is nothing in the least to us believing Gentiles, whether the *Fathers* before the Flood, or after

after the Flood before *Abraham*, were in Covenant or not in Covenant, were ſigned or not ſigned, ſeeing we claim not *from*, by, and under *them*, as Heirs to them, but it is *much* to us, on what *Termes* it pleaſed God to tranſact and deal with *Abraham*, and under what *Conditions*, and with what duties *Abraham* did receive the Covenant and Promiſe, whether himſelf and his muſt be ſigned or not ſigned; ſeeing it is *from*, by, and under *him*, and by vertue of the Covenant of Promiſe made with *him*, that *we* do claim, and hold. And ſurely, if *we* do claim and hold in, by and under *Abraham*, by the Deed and Charter made to him, we muſt alſo claim and hold as he did, under the Duties and Conditions in that Deed and Charter, and now, is it not to deny the Concluſion after Conceſſion of the Premiſes, for you to deny Believers and their Children muſt be ſigned, when yet you do acknowledge they are under *Abrahams* Covenant, which (as I have proved) requires ſuch ſigning.

Ay! but you will ſay, "the *Patriarchs* were in the Covenant of Grace before *Abraham*, all as much as we, and yet ſigning had no uſe among *them*; and therefore the Incumbence and Obligation to ſign and to be ſigned by vertue of the Covenant, being

ing founded not on the ſubſtance of it, but on the Adminiſtration, cannot be *Immutably* and everlaſtingly the ſame.] And, indeed, it muſt be acknowledged (that) ſigning was not in uſe among the Fathers before *Abraham*, at leaſt not in the Account of the Scriptures, the Scriptures being deeply ſilent touching any ſuch thing; but then the Scripture is as ſilent touching any Covenant tranſaction made with thoſe Fathers, as it is touching ſigning by vertue of ſuch a Covenant; So that, you are too poſitive Sir, and without Book, to affirm *them* as much in Covenant as we, and their *Children* as Holy by vertue of a Covenant tranſaction as ours. But ſuppoſing though not granting a *Covenant* tranſaction to have paſſed between God and the Fathers before *Abraham*, for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation through the *Meſſiah*, and ſuppoſing alſo, *no* ſigning by vertue of *that* Covenant, for all that ſpace of time, (which however, on ſuppoſal there was ſuch a Covenant is a hardneſs to think;) yet, (in regard that Covenant could not be the Covenant of *Abraham*) though there was no ſigning *then*, the *Obligation* to ſign and to be ſigned by vertue of the Covenant of *Abraham*, (which as I have ſhewed doth indiſpenſibly and neceſſarily require it,) is

as

as Immutably and *Everlaſtingly* the *ſame*, and in the ſame Scriptural Sence, *as* the very *Covenant* it ſelf is *ſo*; It is *for* Everaſting, though not *from* Everlaſting, it is Everlaſting *à Parte Poſt*, though not *à Parte ante*; *I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations for an Everlaſting Covenant*, &c. Everlaſting, not a *parte ante*, as *from* Everlaſting, for before *Abraham* was, this Covenant could not be between God and *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and to his Seed after him, and therefore it muſt be underſtood a *parte poſt*, as a Covenant *to* Everlaſting; And in *this ſence*, the Obligation and Duty of the Covenant is as capable of being Everlaſting as the Covenant it ſelf; which was the *third particular* to be demonſtrated.

What I have diſcourſed already, might juſtly ſuperſede any further anſwer to what you offer in the following Paragraph, about the Church Memberſhip of Infants, on occaſion of my ſaying [that the Church is one, though the Teſtaments be not, and that Children were Members not only of the Legal, but of the Goſpel Church, and that, for above Four Hundred Years before the Law; It *being Goſpel that was Preached to Abraham*:] for " you ſay on that occaſion,

that

" that the Gospel was Preached too to *A-*
" *dam*, at the time that he was told that the
" Seed of the woman should break the head of the Serpent. But I have proved that it was not *told* (as you express it) to *Adam*, but to the *Serpent*, as being spoken not by way of Promise to the one, but of denunciation of a Sentence on the other; nor, in the Account of the Scriptures, was the Gospel Preached to *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, &c. nor were *they*, in the Account of the Scriptures, in and under any Covenant of Grace for Eternal Life and Salvation, much less in and under the same Covenant, with believing *Abraham*, and his true Seed; The *Covenant* of *Grace*, in the Promise of the Messiah for Salvation and Eternal Life, being in the Account of the Scriptures, *first transacted* with believing *Abraham*, and no otherwise.

And here, by the way, observe as a matter of no small moment, that Almighty God did *no sooner*, in the Account of the Scriptures, transact with man in way of Covenant for Eternal Life and Salvation, through the Messiah, but he obliged those in that Covenant, to *keep it* in the sign, and that from the beginning, *as soon* as he did institute any *sign* of the Covenant of Grace for *Parents* (which, in the Account of the Scrip-

Scriptures, was as ſoon as he *Eſtabliſhed* the Covenant, he did ordain *it* ſhould be put on the *Children* alſo, and as much commanded the wearing of *it* by Infants, as by the Adult. So that from the *very beginning* of a Covenant tranſaction for Eternal Life and Salvation, or in the firſt making of the Covenant of Grace according to the Scriptures, (and we are to begin our accounts where they do,) the Obligation to keep the ſign of the Covenant, or to keep the Covenant in the ſign of it, was laid on *Abraham* for Children and Infants, as well as for himſelf and others in Age; and that, by ſpecial direction. And now, conſider once again if there be no *connexion* between the ſubſtance of the Covenant and the Obligation (*viz.* to be ſigned;) Is not the ſubſtance of the Covenant on Gods part, the Promiſe to *Abraham* to be a God to him, and to his Seed after him in their Generations? And hath not God ſaid, [*becauſe*] *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed*, therefore *thou ſhalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed*? So plainly God hath put together the *Promiſe*, which is on his part, and the *Duty* and Obligation that lyes on ours: and when God hath *joyned* them, and put them together, what man, or men ſhall dare to *ſeparate*, and put them aſunder?

Again,

Again, whereas you ſay, "it is one "and the ſame Church for ſubſtance, that the Old Patriarchs before *Abraham*, and that we the Believing *Gentiles* as well as believing *Abraham* himſelf, did and do belong unto.] I anſwer, it is one and the ſame *Inviſible Church*; But if we take a Church *viſibly* and *Formally*, (as now we are to take it, when we do ſpeak of *Church-Membership*:) Namely, for a Corporation or viſible Society of Holy Men, framed, and formed under certain ſpecial, external and diſtinguiſhing Laws and Inſtitutions, for Spiritual ends; Then I ſay, ſo taking it, we do not read in Holy Scriptures of any Church, any formal Church, any more than of a formal Covenant before *Abraham*; It being in *his* Family that it pleaſed God to lay the firſt Foundation of the Commonwealth and Polity of *Iſrael*, and to form to himſelf a ſpecial Corporation and Society of Men, under viſible and diſtinguiſhing Tokens, and this is properly called a *Church*. For indeed a Church is nothing but a Company of *called* ones, viſibly Aſſociated; ἐκκλησία is *ab* ἐκκαλεῖν, A Church is termed ſo from calling; Now as in the Account of Holy Scripture, *Abraham* and his Family were the *Firſt* that God tranſacted with in way of *Covenant*, for Grace

and

and Salvation through the Meſſiah; So in the ſame account of Holy Scriptures, the *firſt* viſible *gathered Church*, was in *Abrahams* Family, *Abraham* being the firſt that God in the Holy Scriptures is affirmed to have *called* out from his own Kindred, and his *own* Countrey to *another* that he knew not, which calling of him from his own Countrey to another that he knew not, was a *figure* (and by our Apoſtle is interpreted to be ſo *Heb.* 11.) of the *true* Spiritual calling of a Chriſtian, which is a calling out of, and from the preſent evil World unto the Heavenly Country, the New *Jeruſalem* that is above. Not but that before *Abraham* there were Righteous and good men, who in their Lives and Converſations, divided from the Communion of the World; Men that lived juſtly and Righteouſly, and ſo were *truly* called out of the World, but yet they did not (at leaſt the Scripture doth not intimate they did) actually divide and ſeparate from others into diſtinct Societies, under any external and diſtinguiſhing Rites before *Abraham*; yes there were Righteous and good men before *Abraham*, divided from the Common in the Piety, Sobriety, and Juſtice of their lives, there were Sons of God, diſtinguiſhed by their Piety and Righteouſneſs

from the Sons of men before; *The* Sons of God *took unto them the* Daughters of Men; The Sons of good Men Marryed the Daughters of bad: But they were not Actually divided into distinct Societies and Corporations, under distinguishing Rites and Ceremonies before, and therefore there was not a visible Organical Church before.

And if what I now assert be true (as true it is, for the Holy Scripture no where intimates not in the least any such Formalization, Incorporation, or Distinguishing Association of Righteous good men for Spiritual and Holy ends before *Abraham*;) then certainly no reasonable man hath any cause to admire that before *Abraham* there should be no *signing*; I mean, no use of any *Initiating Rite*, any Rite of Matriculation, or of entring into the Spiritual Corporation and Society of the Church; for no *Matriculation*, no Initiation into any Corporation or Society is to be conceived before the Corporation and Society it self be Constituted and Formed; Nor can any *Rite* and Ceremony of Matriculation or Initiation be conceived extant before Matriculation and Initiation it self be so. No wonder then if no signing before *Abraham*, seeing no *Formal Church* before *Abraham*; But yet assoon as it pleased God in Infinite Wisdom

Wiſdom to ordain the Incorporating of Holy Men into a viſible Society for Holy and Spiritual ends, by making a *Formal Covenant* with them, and ſo diſtinguiſhing and dividing of them from others, he was then pleaſed to aſſume into that Society, as members of it, *Children* as well as *Parents*, *Infants* as well as *Adult* ones; And to ordain, that the *Sign* of the Covenant, as the Rite and Ceremony of their Initiation and Admiſſion (viſibly and externally) into the Society of the Righteous, or into the Church, ſhould be *put* upon *them*; and *this* in deep Council, the better to *perpetuate* his Church; So that from the beginning of the conſtitution of a Church, *Infants* were admitted unto Memberſhip in it; and this is the *Nurſery* of the Church.

What you next tell me, (*viz.*) "that there are other ſignes of the Covenant beſides Baptiſm; for inſtance, as Circumciſion of old (I believe you meant the Paſſover of old;) ſo the Lords Supper now, of which Infants are not by vertue of the Covenant, or any Adminiſtration of it, taken to be proper Subjects] This, after what is ſaid already, is altogether impertinent; for the *Sign* we diſpute about, is that *Initiating Sign* only, which is the *Rite of admitting* perſons into the viſible Organiz'd

Society of the faithful (a Society afterwards called the Common-wealth of *Israel*,) it being of *this* only that *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. (from which I argued) can be understood: and *this* Baptism *is*, as Circumcision *was*. Nor was the Passover ever *such a Sign*, nor is the Lords Supper *one* now.

"Ay! but if Infants are capable of be-"ing Initiated into the Church of Christ by "Baptism, then say you, they cannot just-"ly be denyed the Proper means of nou-"rishment and growth by being admitted "to the Supper also.] But this is a gross *non sequitur*, For what can be more evident than that the Subjects of the Ordinance of Baptism and of that of the Lords Supper are very different, as different as those of the Ordinance of Circumcision, and that of the Pascal Lamb (were;) For as the Institution of the Ordinance of Circumcision was above 400 years before that of the Passover, so even Jesus Christ himself, to intimate the same difference, did institute the Ordinance of Baptism (for his Disciples Baptized) long before his *Death*, whereas that of the Holy Supper (being but a Commemoration of *it*) was not instituted but just before his Passion.

And

And theſe conſiderations lead me to the *laſt thing* of any moment which you offer, a thing on which your whole Party do much inſiſt, and is, "that as Infants are uncapa-"ble of ſelf Examination, of preparation "for the Lords Supper, and of diſcerning "of the Lords Body, which are *neceſſary* "*requiſites* to a due participation of that "Holy Ordinance, and therefore are de-"nyed it; So they are equally *uncapable* of "*Faith* and of *Repentance* which are the *re-*"*quiſite conditions* of Admiſſion to Bap-"tiſm, and conſequently, on equal reaſon "are to be refuſed both the one, and the "other."]

But here you ſhould have proved *Faith* and *Repentance* neceſſary Conditions of *all* admiſſion to Baptiſm, or Initiation into the Goſpel Church; I grant *them* to be *ſo* to that of the *Adult Heathen*; and ſo *they* were before, in ſome degree, to thoſe of *them* that would Aſſociate with the Family of *Abraham*; And ſo *they* were to *Abraham* himſelf, for *Abraham* himſelf *received the Sign of Circumciſion*, or Circumciſion a ſign of the Covenant between God and him, as a *Seal* and full Confirmation of that *Righteouſneſs by Faith, which he had while Uncircumciſed*; But then, as *Abraham* was admitted for his own Faith, but

his Family in, by and under him, as Dedicated by Him; So now the *Adult Heathen* if they be admitted, it must be in a way of Faith and Repentance for themselves; but for their *Families*; Those in them that are not yet Adult and come to Age, and in a Capacity of consenting or refusing for themselves; They must be admitted as such were in *Abrahams* Family, *viz.* in, by and under their Parents and Heads, who Dedicate them.

But as to this so much is said by so many others, and so much is hinted also by my self in my Former Letter, that I do not think it worth the while to stay longer upon it; Only I find in *Mr. Cradock* in his Harmony of the Evangelists, a Passage so full in this particular, and so convincing, that I should do you some wrong, and my discourse more, to omit it: First, *saith he* he gives them a Command and Commission to goe and Disciple all Nations, Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, beginning at *Jerusalem*, [*Isa.* 2. 3. and 40. 9. *Psal.* 110. 2.] and declares that, he that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. For whereas before he confined them to Preach only to *Israel*, now they must Preach to *every* Crea-

Creature (namely, that is fit to be Preached to) that is, to all Nations. And ſuch as were converted by their Miniſtry from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity, they were to Baptize. So that *this* is *not the firſt Inſtitution* of Baptiſm, but an *inlarging* of their former Commiſſion. *Neither* are theſe words any *Direction* as *to that other matter of receiving or admitting Infants, or thoſe that were not Infants* to Baptiſm: *That*, we may ſuppoſe was ſufficiently notified to them *before*, both by the common *practiſe* of their Anceſtors in the Jewiſh Religion, and by the *vulgar notion* of Baptiſm, whilſt it was familiarly uſed among the *Jews*, both to their *own* and their *Proſelite Children*, and poſſibly by Chriſts ſpecial *direction* alſo, though not mentioned by any of the Evangeliſts, who ſet not *down* all *the words* of the *Firſt Inſtitution of Baptiſm*, which long *preceded* this time, as appears plainly from thoſe words, *Joh.* 4 1, 2. *When therefore the Lord knew how the Phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and Baptized more Diſciples then John, though Jeſus himſelf Baptized not but his Diſciples.* Certainly, Chriſt Inſtituted Baptiſm, and gave his Apoſtles Commiſſion before they took upon them to Baptize any, which we find they did in great Numbers; yet the Goſpel does not

expreſs the words of this Firſt Inſtitution, nor the certain time of it, in the courſe of Chriſts Miniſtry among them; but certainly it was ſometime before that paſſage of ſtory related in that forementioned place, *Joh.* 4. &c.]

To that aſſertion of mine, [*That the Churches of Chriſt* univerſally *have had a cuſtom of Baptizing Infants, and for ought appears,* perpetually;] you tell me with a preſumption too big for a greater *Antiquary*, (ſo much more eaſie it is to tell then to do,) "that you could *eaſily* give ſufficient "*evidence* that the Churches of Chriſt *uni*-"*verſally* have not had ſuch a cuſtom:] And I pray you, if it be ſo *eaſy*, oblige the World, and me particularly, by giving *it*; for ſtill I think that in the time (at leaſt) of St. *Auſtin*, the Cuſtom was *Univerſal*, and that then, it was taken alſo, to have been perpetually *ſo*; and this, by an Apoſtolical Tradition.

But that is more *Extravagant* which you add immediately after, and which may ſerve for a *Specimen* of your Ability to perform the boaſt you made before, "that we do "not find any footſteps of Infants Baptiſm "in the World till ſome Hundreds of years "after Chriſt, not till the conceit grew and "took place of giving Gods Grace by it

in

in *Cyprians* time.] But how learnedly and knowingly this is spoken may be seen in *Tertullian*, who if you know any thing in Antiquity, must be acknowledged to have been, in time before *Cyprian*, as being the most Antient of the Latine Fathers, and born in the year Two Hundred; and yet *he* in his Book *de Bapt. c.* 18. where for certain *Reasons* (but I pray you mark, the Novelty of the practise is not *one* of them,) he doth *Dehort* the Baptizing of Infants (as he did also *advise* the deferring of Baptism to the Adult, and in *both* was singular,) doth by that very *dehortation*, plainly intimate the *common practise* of it. *Itaq*, saith he, *pro cujusq; personæ conditione ac dispositione, etiam* Ætate, *Baptismi* Cunctatio *Utilior est: præsertim tamen circa* Parvulos, *quid enim necesse est, si non tam necesse, sponsores etiam periculo ingeri*, &c. So *Tertullian*; but again, what can you say to *Irenæus* who was before *Tertullian*, and near the times of the Apostles, when he tells us *adversus hæres.* l. 2. 39. *Christus venit omnes per seipsum salvare, omnes Inquam, qui per seipsum* Renascuntur *in Deum*; Infantes *& parvulos & pueros*; and by *Renascentia* is understood Baptism, as is universally agreed by all learned in the Fathers.

And

And whereas I affirmed [*Antipedobaptiſme* to make the Church of Chriſt a Church *unius ætatis*;] you miſtook my meaning when you took it to have been "that your "Opinion was but a *Novelty*, (though that "be true too;) and that ſeeing the Church "of Chriſt cannot be without a true Bap-"tiſm, and true Baptiſm, in your ſenſe of "Anabaptiſm, hath been not much above "an Age or Century, particularly ſince "the time of *Muncer* (whom *Munſter* "calls *Monetarius*, leaſt he ſhould be "thought of Kin to him;) and ſince *John* "of *Leyden* and *Knipperdolling*; That "therefore before the ariſing of theſe *new* "*lights*, the true Church for many hundred "years, had no exiſtence and being.] For to do my ſelf right, and you no wrong, I meant it not in uſing that expreſſion; I alluded in it to *L. Florus*, who ſpeaking of the *Romans* in their Civil Original under *Romulus*, while yet they had no Women, and ſo no hope of Poſterity; ſayes, *Res erat* Unius Ætatis, *populus virorum*: and I intimated by it, that *Antipedobaptiſme* by grubbing up of Infants, and throwing them out of the Church, doth indeed deſtroy the *Nurſery* of the Church, and ſo, in one Age, after the Extinction of the old ſtocks, doth put it in no ſmall hazard of being utterly extirped;

tirped; And now having this occasion, I dare, in demonstration of the Justice of the hint, almost appeal unto your own Experience, if of the Children of Persons of your perswasion, within the compass of your own knowledge, that are Adult, and come to years of Discretion, and were not Baptized in their Infancy by some Relation or Friend, *one* almost in *ten* is any wise Baptized, and so entred into any Church (either yours or ours;) for growing up, *dislike* of your Opinion for the most part doth keep them from you; And *Shame* of being Baptized in Age, (a thing disused, and as things of that nature commonly are, a thing that makes talk and gazing,) keeps them from us; And thus being in no Church, are visibly in the state of Heathens.

In your next remark, [when I make the denyal of Infants Baptism a robbing Parents of a sensible ground of hope for their Children in case of the decease of any of them in Infancy,] you do me manifest *Injustice* to Insinuate a meaning of *Opus operatum*, a thing as far from my intentions as words. But I have sufficiently expressed my Sentiments in that particular in the Paragraph reflected on, to those that are considerate and candid, and therefore, there remains no more to be said of it now.

But

But as to *what* you offer in the last place, [concerning the Powerful Motive to dedicate himself to God, which, I said, *Antipedobaptisme* depriveth a Child of;] namely, "that for your part, you are of opini-"on that nothing can be a greater *hinder-*"*ance* to him than Baptism, since he is here-"by induced to reckon himself already a "good Christian, and in a state of Salvati-"on, as having had the Sign of the Cove-"nant already applyed to him in his Infant "State, without looking after the new birth, "and being acquainted with the Mystery of "Spiritual Regeneration, &c.] I profess I was astonisht to read *it*, both for the *Scandal* and offence it cannot but administer to those of a contrary perswasion; as also for the *ill reflection* which, with too much Colour, it may be interpreted to imply upon the Wisdom and Counsel of God, who, both before the Law, and under the Law, was pleased to *Institute the Signing of Children* with the Sign of the Covenant; *which* doubtless, had it been an *impediment* and hinderance to their Regeneration, and to Salvation, much more if a most powerful *one*, he, in his infinite goodness and clemency, as well as wisdom and conduct, would never have done. And do you indeed think that the Circumcision of *Children*, instead

of

of being a furtherance to the work of Regeneration in *them*, was truly a hinderance to it, and that that which God intended for a meanes of Conſervation and Perpetuation of his Church, was really and in effect, a way to deſtroy it: Where was the *Wiſdom* of Almighty God, if he knew not what means were proper towards the Salvation of his Creatures? And where his *Goodneſs*, if he ordained what he knew improper? It is certain, if Baptiſm by being put on Children in their Infancy, in token of their being given to *God in Covenant*, be in it ſelf a hinderance to their Regeneration; Circumciſion which was put on Children in Infancy, and in token of their being given to *God in Covenant*, could be no furtherance, and conſequently was a means of all others moſt improper to continue the Church, and ſo, a means equally unworthy both of Divine Prudence and Wiſdom, and of his Goodneſs and Mercy.

Thus I have finiſhed my defence of the *Argument* for Infants Baptiſm from *Gen.* 17, and I think, have anſwered all is capable of being oppoſed againſt *it*, and yet ſeeing I know not but you may have more, I now offer, that if you have any thing elſe of any Moment to object either againſt the Argument it ſelf, or againſt what is offered

now

now in the defence of it; If you propose it, so it be without unnecessary digressions into common places, and without popular trappings, and it be with the Candour and Sincerity, and with the modesty and temper that becomes a lover and seeker of Truth, I shall answer it chearfully, and therein give another Instance how much I am.

Bowden April 1st.
1682.

Dear Sir,

Your True Friend

R. B.

The

The Third Letter.

Dear Sir,

YOur Letter of the 29th. of *September* in Answer to that I sent you the 21st. of *April*, though put into so good and safe a hand, came not to mine before this 14th. of *October*, and then open. Happily it had occasion to call in on Friends; and many times, the farthest way about is neareſt home.

However, though late come, I do assure you it is Welcome; for I learn by it that the Controversie long depending, and which I fear'd would be Eternal, is not likely to continue much longer. And that after all the Exclamations of Evident and most Evident, of Plain and most Plain, of Scriptural, of Solid, of Substantial and Cogent which you make on what *You* say; and of Chimera's, of Repugnant to Scripture, of doubtful Consequencies and ambiguous

guous Uncertainties, of violence to the Text, of Corruption of Scripture, and of Addition to it on what I prove. The whole *now* is to determine on two *Iſſues*, the one Relating to the Duty enjoyned *Gen.* 17. 9. the other to the Subject of that duty; [what is meant by the Seed, and what by keeping the Covenant:]

As to the *Firſt Iſſue* which concerns the Subject of the Duty (for I will begin with *that*,) I have abundantly evinced in my laſt Letter (and yet you take no notice of it) that by Seed in the 9th. verſe, muſt be underſtood the Spiritual, as well as the Carnal Seed, and that, becauſe the ſame Seed is meant in the 9th. verſe that is in the 7th. and 8th. verſes, the ſame ſubject in the general obligation verſe the 9th. in all reſpects, that is in the promiſe, verſes 7th. and 8th. and the ſame ſubject in the temporal promiſe verſe the 8th. that is in the Spiritual verſe the 7th: and the ſubject in the 7th. (you grant) doth take in all the Seed, the Spiritual as well as the Carnal, and therefore, ſo it muſt be in the 8th. and the 9th. and in the 10th. alſo.

Ay! but ſay you, the 8th. verſe is to be underſtood only of the *Carnal Seed*, and why only (ſay I) unleſs the 7th. be alſo to be underſtood, of *that* only doth the Holy

Ghoſt

Ghost distinguish? or if he do not, how dare you? the Subjects are the same in both; The Connexion carries it for the same Subjects; and in both the Verses there are the same words to express the subject, and why not then the same subjects meant by the same words? Especially in regard the whole is but a continuation of one Speech of God to *Abraham*; *I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed*, verse the 7th. *And I will give to thee, and thy Seed*, verse the 8th.

It it true (as you suggest) in the Letter, *Canaan* is Promised too, and was Possessed by the Carnal Seed, but the Litteral is not the only sence, and therefore the Litteral are not the only subjects: The Mystical and Spiritual is the principal sence, and therefore the Mystical and Spirittual are the principal subjects: Thus Argueth the Apostle, *Seed* (saith he) not Seeds: Seed, and that Seed was *Isaac* in the Letter, for the promise even of *Canaan* (mark it) was not made to *Ishmael*, though he were *Abrahams* Seed too, and then alive, and with him, nor to the Seed of *Abraham* that should derive from him by *Ishmael*, but it was made to *Isaac*, *in* Isaac *shall thy Seed be called*: and *Isaac* in the Letter, in the Mystery is Christ. *He saith not* Seeds

(ſaith he) as comprehending *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*, but he ſaith *Seed*, as ſpeaking but of one, of *Iſaac* only, which *Iſaac* in the Truth is Chriſt Myſtical. Further, conſider though *Canaan* only was promiſed in the Letter, verſe the 8th, the World is intended in the Myſtery, and therefore, though it be ſaid in the Text, *The Land in which thou art a Stranger, even all the Land of Canaan*, yet the Apoſtle amplifyeth the expreſſion, *Heb.* 11. 13. and ſaith, *They were Pilgrims and Strangers upon the Earth*, not in *Canaan* only, but in the Earth. And if in the Promiſe which is made of *Canaan* the World be intended, well may believing *Gentiles* be intended in the Seed to whom it is made: For how elſe as they are *Abrahams* Seed is *all* theirs, if all were not ſome where given to *Abraham* and to his Seed, and where is all given to *Abraham* and to his Seed, and ſo to believing *Gentiles*, but here? Read I pray adviſedly, what our Apoſtle argues, *Gal.* 3. And in your next take alſo what I argued in my laſt, Paragraph by Paragraph, and ſo reply to it; Then happily you will ſee a conſequence and Cogency that yet you do not, or that you diſſemble if you do. Remember alſo that when it is ſaid in verſe the 10th, *This is my Covenant which ye ſhall keep*

keep between me and ye, and thy Seed after thee, there is no ſuch Implication as you conceive there is in this expreſſion [between me and thee and thy Seed] of the *ſubjects* of the Duty [of keeping that Covenant,] but of the *Parties* in the Covenant; which (as I told you formerly) are three, and (mark it) God is one of them: *Between me*, namely, God on the one part, and *ye*, thou *Abraham* and thy natural Family here preſent on the other part, *and thy Seed*, *Iſaac* in the Letter in whom the Seed was called, and Chriſt (typified in *Iſaac*, and in him the believing *Gentiles*, Children of the Promiſe) in the myſtery on the third part. It is unadviſed to inferr that the *Seed* here is obliged to keep the Covenant of Circumciſion by vertue of that expreſſion, the ſubjects that are bound to keep it are *ye*, ye *ſhall keep* this my *Covenant*, and the [Ye] are diſtinguiſhed from the *Seed*, [*between me and ye, and thy Seed:*] you may as well ſay, *all* the parties are obliged to keep it, and God is one of them, as that, by force of that expreſſion, *any* one is: thoſe that are to keep it are repreſented under the term [ye;] and they were to keep it between God and themſelves, and the Seed, as a ſign of the Tripartite,] Covenant between them. And to be clear, I under-

ſtand the ſame Seed in the 7th. 8th. 9th. and 10th. verſes; *Iſaac* in the Letter, Chriſt Myſtical in the Spirit and Myſtery. This for the firſt Iſſue.

As for the other which relates to the Duty, what can almoſt be plainer, than that by keeping of the Covenant in the 9th. verſe, is meant keeping of it in the ſign, or keeping the ſign of the Covenant, for it is, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed* in the 9th verſe, and then immediately is added in the 10th. in one continued Speech, *This is my Covenant which ye ſhall keep*, &c. So that the ſence and meaning of the Phraſe [of keeping the Covenant] in either verſe, is clearly the meaning of it in both; And therefore to keep the Covenant in the 9th. verſe, is to keep the ſign of the Covenant, ſeeing to keep the Covenant in the 10th. is to keep it ſo, [in the ſign.]

That to keep the Covenant in the 10th. verſe is to keep it in the ſign is manifeſt, ſeeing their being Circumciſed could not be a keeping of the Covenant (as it is plainly intimated in verſe the 10th. to be) but ſo, (*viz.*) as it was the obſervation of the ſign of the Covenant, and thus [in the ſign] the Covenant of God was kept in Circumciſion, as the Paſſover is ſaid to be kept

when

when the Lamb was eaten in Memory of it; So Scriptural a way of ſpeaking this is. I ſay, as the Feaſt of the Paſchal Lamb was not the Paſſover it ſelf, but a ſign only of the paſſing over, and yet the Paſſover is ſaid to have been kept, when that Feaſt was kept (in ſign of it,) as by comparing *Num.* 9. 2. &c. with *Exod.* 12. 3, 4, 12, 13. &c. manifeſtly appears. So likewiſe Circumciſion, though it were not in it ſelf the very Covenant of God, but only the ſign of that Covenant; [*Abraham received the* ſign *of Circumciſion*, *Rom.* 4. and in *Gen.* 17. 11. *It ſhall be a* token *of the Covenant between me and you.*] Yet the Covenant of God (according to the way of Scriptural Expreſſion) might well be ſaid to be kept, when Circumciſion the ſign of it, was obſerved. The Covenant in Scripture Language is ſaid to be kept, when the ſign of it is kept, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant*, *is*, thou ſhalt keep the ſign of my Covenant. *This is my Covenant which ye ſhall keep*, is, this is the ſign of my Covenant which ye ſhall keep. And if keeping Circumciſion then were keeping of the Covenant, becauſe Circumciſion was the then ſign of it; then keeping Baptiſm, now is keeping the Covenant, becauſe Baptiſm is now the ſign of it. To keep the Covenant here, is

as I have proved to keep the ſign.

And now conſider ſeriouſly, how plain and eaſie a ſence this is I have of the words, *I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, between me* the Lord, *and thee* Abraham, and thy Seed *Iſaac* in the Letter and Spirit, *to be a God to thee* Abraham, *and to thy Seed after thee, Iſaac* in the Letter and Spirit *And I will give to thee* Abraham, *and to thy Seed Iſaac* in the Letter and Spirit, *all the Land in which thou art a Stranger.* Even the *Land of Canaan* in the Letter to *Iſaac*, in the Letter, and the World the whole World in the Spirit and Myſtery, to *Iſaac* in the Myſtery, and therefore thou *Abraham* and thy Seed [*Iſaac* in the Letter and Spirit] ſhall keep [the ſign of] my Covenant. *(But) this is* [*the ſign of*] *my Covenant which ye* which are now here, thou *Abraham* and *Iſhmael* thy Son according to the Fleſh, and the reſt of thy Houſhold here which ſtand for all the Seed according to the Fleſh as ſo, *This is* [the ſign of] *my Covenant which ye*, for your part, *ſhall keep* [as a ſign of the Covenant I have made *between me and ye, and thy Seed* Iſaac the Seed of the Promiſe, and not of the Fleſh] *every Man-child among you* [ye the Natural Family and Carnal Seed] *ſhall be Circumciſed.* Among you,

you, he doth not ſay among the Seed; The Seed is to keep the Covenant in a ſign verſe the 9th. but the Natural Family only are to keep it in *this* ſign, in Circumciſion; *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore* [in the ſign of it] *thou and thy Seed*; (But) *this is my Covenant which ye ſhall keep, &c.* Every Man-child ſhall be Circumciſed.

Ay, ſay you, but in the ſign of it is your Addition only. Not ſo ſay I, it is but my Explication according to the Scripture. Ay, but when God did tell *Abraham*, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore* thou *and thy Seed*, had no more (ſay you) been added, *Abraham* could never have underſtood that God intended hereby, this Covenant was to be obſerved in any external ſign; true, ſay I, had not God explained his meaning, *Abraham* might well have doubted of it; but why doubt you? Since more is added, and in what is added, God explains himſelf, and ſhews that, by keeping the Covenant, he meant keeping the ſign of it. Ay, but a ſign is a common ſeparable accident to a Covenant (in general,) well, but it is not ſo to this (in ſpecial;) Other Covenants have been (you ſay) without a ſign; but to be ſure, in this a ſign is made neceſſary; For to keep the Covenant is to keep the ſign. Ay, ſay you, but let go this 7th.

of *Geneſis* which is no more to purpoſe then the firſt, and then I will anſwer what elſe you have to ſay. Yes, very likely, as you have what is already ſaid, and if I will throw away my weapons you will fight me. In fine, what (ſay you) ſo important an ordinance to depend on conſequence from an Old Teſtament Text! Yes (ſay I) and on the conſequence of this Old Teſtament Text depends all the New Teſtament Doctrine of our Inheritance and Heirſhip; See *Gal.* 3.

And now, Dear Sir, is there not a word, not a ſyllable (as you expreſs it) in the 17th. of *Geneſis*, that the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are to keep the Covenant in the ſign of it? Have not I proved the Seed here is *Iſaac* in the Spirit Principally? doth not God diſtinguiſh between ye and thy Seed? is not Circumciſion enjoyned only on the natural Carnal Family of *Abraham* in the term *ye* as it is diſtinguiſhed from the Seed? is not the ſame the ſubject in the Obligation in the 9th. verſe, that is in the Promiſe Spiritual in the 7th. and temporal in the 8th. you cannot deny it, if you read the Text. If you deſign me any ſatisfaction, it muſt not be by blending and confounding things that differ, nor by common placing and keeping off in generals, but you muſt come up

cloſe

cloſe to the matter, and ſhew why the ſubject in the general Obligation verſe the 9th. is, in all reſpects the ſame with that in the Promiſe, both the Temporal and the Spiritual, but the ſubjects of the Obligation to Circumciſion in particular, which is in the 10th. is altered. It is not there thou and thy Seed as all along before, but [*ye*] and [*ye*] is in the Letter *Abraham*, and thoſe then with him there: But *Iſaac* was not there, he was the Promiſed Seed. Again, why doth God diſtinguiſh [*ye*] from the Seed; *between me and ye, and thy Seed.* In fine, why all along in the 10th. and 11th. verſes, both in the impoſition of Circumciſion, and in the intimation of the end and uſe of it, the Holy Ghoſt doth uſe a reſtrictive term, and never mention the Seed but *ye*, *ye ſhall keep* &c. and *it ſhall be a token between me and ye*; He ſaith not thy Seed ſhall keep it *&c.* nor that it ſhall be a token to the Seed; He ſaith thy Seed ſhall keep the Covenant in a ſign, but doth not ſay that they ſhall keep the Covenant in this ſign; They muſt keep a ſign but not this ſign. Clear up theſe queſtions and you do ſomething, and without it all is nothing.

Thus I have briefly ſtated the iſſues on which the thing in Controverſie between us now depends, and I have anſwered your objections

jections, and am bold to say again that I have done it with the candour and fairness that becomes a seeker of truth. I mince not what you say; I raise no dust to hide your strength, or blind the eyes of a Party. I do not frighten you with the threatnings on diminutions of Scripture; as you do me with those on Additions; such common placing here is out of place, and is fooling. I love not Tragical Declamations instead of Argumentation. Nor yet am I by noise and clamour and harangues of words which take with the people, but not with the wise, to be diverted from pursuing advantages. I know where I pinch you; and yet I hate to cry *Victoria* while the field is disputing. I am a lover of plainness; as well as a seeker of all truth, and therefore use as little Artifice in arguing, as I do in Professing my self,

October 14. 1682.

Dear Sir

Your Real Friend

R. B.

The

The Fourth and Laſt Letter.

Dear Sir,

IN your *former* Letter of *September* the 29th. you told me, "that the words "in the 17th. of *Geneſis* 9th. [*Thou* "*ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore thou* "*and thy Seed*, &c.] do neither expreſs "nor give any the leaſt intimation of any "ſign at all that God intended ſhould be An-"nexed unto the Covenant, &c. for there "God commands *Abraham* to keep the "Covenant in General Terms only, and "doth not ſay thou ſhalt keep my Cove-"nant in the *ſign* of it, *that* being (ſay you) my Addition only, *&c.* But in *this* of *December* the 15th. which I Received the 20th. you tell me, that as far as you can diſcern, God ſpeaks but of *one* ſign in *both* verſes, [*viz.* 9. 10] Now, how I pray you can he ſpeak of *one* ſign in *both* verſes, if (as you copiouſly affirmed) he

ſpeaks

ſpeaks nothing in the leaſt of any ſign at all in *one* of them? who is it now (to uſe your own Expreſſions) that is Dazled? that ſees or ſaw one for two, and two for one? and yet, all you ſay is Demonſtration, 'tis Solid, Scriptural, Subſtantial, and all I ſay is Chymera's, Contradictions, unproved Dictates, &c. Really Dear Sir, ſome grains of *Modeſty* would do no hurt; *It* would at leaſt ſerve to make your *Alterations* more excuſable.

But the *former*, is not the only *Point* (though mind, it be one of the two Iſſues on which the whole between us muſt determine,) in which you are ſo *ſlippery*; you are as much *ſo* in another, and *that* the ſecond Iſſue; for in your former Letters, all along, you underſtand by the *Spiritual Seed* as I do, and as you ought, (*viz.*) Chriſt and Believing *Gentiles* (to whom happily, you add Believing *Jews*,) or Chriſt Myſtical repreſented in *Iſaac*, and indeed, without a ſofter place in ones head than I am willing to believe you have, it is impoſſible, ſeriouſly, to take it otherwiſe; for 'tis [*in Iſaac thy Seed ſhall be called*;] not [thy Seed ſhall be called *Iſaac*.] And yet, in your Letter *now* you take the Spiritual Seed for *Iſaac's Perſon*; A ſence of the Spiritual Seed againſt ſence; For it is *Iſaac*

in

in the Spirit only that is the Spiritual Seed, and *Iſaac* in the Spirit, is Chriſt Myſtical; For ſo the Apoſtle [*and to thy Seed which is Chriſt.*] It is true, *Iſaac* was a Myſtical Perſon as he was a Type and Figure; but if you mean but *that* by his being the Spiritual Seed, [that he was the Seed of *Abraham*, and was a Myſtical Perſon,] then *Iſaac* was no more the Spiritual Seed then *Iſhmael*; *Iſhmael* being as much the Seed of *Abraham*, and as much a Myſtical and Typical perſon as *Iſaac*; *Iſhmael* a Type and Figure of the Legal Carnal Seed, as *Iſaac* of the Believing Evangelical Seed; The former repreſenting the *Jews*, the latter Chriſt and Believing *Gentiles*. Only, as *Iſhmael* to be a Type and Figure of the Carnal *Legal* Seed, was to be born *after the Fleſh*, according to the Rule and Law of Generation in Nature; So *Iſaac* to be a Type and Figure of the Spiritual *Evangelical* Seed [who were to be *born not of bloods, nor of the will of the Fleſh, nor of the will of Man, but of God*] was to be born after *the Spirit*, (*viz.*) by the power of God according to and in performance of his *Promiſe* (made) to *Abraham*. And to be *born after the Spirit*, with reſpect to *Iſaac*, is not (as happily, you may conceive it) to be Regenerated and new born Spiritually, but

but to be born as to his natural Perſon not as *Iſhmael* was, in the ordinary courſe of Nature by meer Carnal Coition; but by *Promiſe*, in a ſupernatural way, above the Rules and Lawes and Powers of Nature, by Almighty Power Aſſiſting; even when it had ceaſed (as the Scripture tells us) to be with *Sarah* after the manner of Women, and when *Abraham* Himſelf alſo was old. See *Gal.* 4. 23, 29. what is to be by *Promiſe* in the one verſe, is to be *born after the Spirit* in the other. To ſtart then a ſence of the Spiritual Seed which was not thought of before, and which were not to the Purpoſe if a good one, is *doubling*; and a Hare is uſed to *double*, when near run down.

Had I been engaged in this controverſie with a man *unprejudiced*, and not with one who, in adherence to an opinion long ago Conceived and Riveted, is obliged to do *all* things to maintain it, with one ſuſceptible of Light, and not with one that *wriggles*, and winds, and turns, and all to avoid it; with one that admits of plain ſence, and not with one that will not ſee, that *thrice one* makes *three*; or, that a Covenant between *God* and *you*, and *thy Seed* after thee, is a Covenant between *three* parties. I ſay, had I had the happineſs of debating

bating and trying of it with a Person indifferent; and not the misfortune of being ingaged with one so hugely prepossessed, and one not very consistent to Himself, or to his Principles, the business long ago had been ended; but who can draw the Picture of *Proteus*, or catch a Capering *Will with* the Wisp? [*Ignis fatuus*]

As to your groundless, severe, Provocative *Reflections* (the which you call *Reproofs* drest up (by all means!) in studyed, *clean, mild, decent, and Christian Language*,) I say once for all, that it were easie for me, if I durst allow my self the liberty you take in that kind, and that it were not both undecent and unchristian to sharpen *my* Pen too: But I am resolved not to gratifie your *design* by any such intemperance. I can better bear then deserve your Reprehensions, and I have (I believe) too great *Advantage* in the *cause*, and in my Argument, to marr *it* by so *bad* Example. I alwayes thought it very improper in Debates and Controversies instead of Arguing, to be (as you Phrase it,) Cutting. He is rather a Butcher then a good Chyrurgion, that delights in cutting, and tearing, and slashing, when there is no need of it. Surely, softer words and harder Arguments would more *become* you.

But

But among all your Groundleſs Provocations, none is more abſurd, nor more unhandſome then the *outcry*, the Tragical Outcry which you raiſe upon a *Miſtake* of the Tranſcriber, and *that* too but in a word, but in a letter, and without marring the Sence; [*in Iſaac ſhall the Seed be called*] viz. [the Seed] inſtead of [thy Seed] for ſo in truth, it was in the *Exemplar*, but likely, on a haſty curſory review of the *Tranſcript* not alter'd, becauſe it ſtood with the ſence. But though it were not in the Firſt Exemplar [the Seed] but [thy Seed,] and [the] indeed were only a miſtake of him that Copyed *it*; yet had you repeated the whole *Period* in which it was inſerted, (but *that* muſt be *cleanly*, *meekly*, *decently*, Diſſembled for the cauſe, and that you might have matter to work on;) it would appear that in that place, and in that manner in which the paſſage was brought in; [the] was not improper; no, no more improper then [thy.] For thus it ſtands in the Letter was ſent — "The Promiſe even "of *Canaan* (mark it) was not made to "*Iſhmael*, though he were *Abrahams* Seed "too, and then alive, and with him; nor "to *the Seed* of *Abraham* that ſhould de-"rive from him by *Iſhmael*, but it was made "to *Iſaac*, *for in* Iſaac *ſhall* the Seed *be*

called, and *Iſaac* in the Letter, in the Myſtery is Chriſt.] And who but *Argus*, if even *He* with all his Hundred Eyes can *ſpy* a fault here? I, but if it cannot be *ſpy'd*, (happily) it may be felt, for (ſay you) *it is a* Palpable *abuſe of Scripture in miſrendring it.*] And is it ſo? but what then, if both [the] and [thy] too had been omitted, and [His] put in? Sure the ſence had ſtill been good, and the Argument good ſtill, and the Scripture not abuſed. For Allegation and Application of Scripture, even by Chriſt Himſelf, and by his Apoſtles, who I believe, would not abuſe it by miſrendring, is not (as might be manifeſted in a hundred Inſtances) alwayes (as you would have it) to a ſyllable, and in termes; but to the ſence, and preſent purpoſe: and ſure I am, that the Seed [of *Abraham*] ſhould be called in *Iſaac*, is to my purpoſe, and is the ſence of *Geneſis* 21. 12. * as much as *Gal.* 4. 30. is to the ſence of *Gen.* 21. 10. and to the Apoſtles Purpoſe. Thus over ſubtile you be; without Diſcretion, without Judgment, and without Candour, and this 'tis to be Learned in *Schoolmen*, and to have ſubtle *John Duns* (Scotus) for a Maſter. But to our buſineſs.

Whereas I had ſaid I have abundantly evinced that by Seed in the 9th. verſe, muſt

be understood the Spiritual as well as the Carnal Seed; you reply, *that may be easily evinced which was never controverted*: As if it had not been in the Controversie all along, and been the *main* of it, and acknowledged to be so in your former Letter [whether the Spiritual Seed were meant in the 7. 8. 9. and 10th. verses as well as the Carnal?] and is not *this* the first Issue, in which you have joyned? Well, but whatever it was before, my business *now*, as you assign it, is to prove (in your terms) that *Isaac quatenus* Spiritual Seed, or (which I think you mean, or mean nothing to purpose) that *Isaac as* he represented the Spiritual Seed or Christ Mystical, is meant in verse the 9th. And this I think I have sufficiently evinced already, and that (after your *Concession*) it needeth no more Eviction; It being indeed a *Figure* of speaking, called in *English* a *Bull*, to say the Spiritual Seed is meant as well as the Carnal (as you say, and say it was never controverted,) and yet, that the Spiritual Seed *as* Spiritual is not meant, for if the Spiritual Seed, be not meant *as* Spiritual, then the Carnal Seed *only*, and not the Spiritual *as well* as the Carnal is meant. This should suffice by way of Rejoynder; But, because (as you affirm) this is a Foundation stone (such as it is)

is) in that ſtructure I have raiſed, and you are ſo over confident (for nature will have its courſe,) that I cannot prove by Scripture, that the Spiritual Seed *as* Spiritual, is meant in the 9th. verſe; *beſides*, what I have done already in my former Letters, which ſtands altogether on this foot, and which you have not in the leaſt reply'd to; and *beſides*, that I cannot conceive if the Spiritual Seed be meant at all (as you grant it is) but that it muſt be meant *as* Spiritual (for it is *you* muſt tell me, *how* elſe, it can be meant;) I ſay, beſides all this, you ſhall have a Text, a plain Text for it. But before I Cite the Text, I will aſſume as certain and agreed between us, to make it come home, what you have *aſſerted* very fully in a *former* Letter, and alſo I have proved; (*viz.*) that the *ſame* ſubject in all reſpects is meant in the 9th. verſe, *that* is in the 8th.; And taking this for granted, I affirm that the Apoſtle ſayes all as much as you would have me to prove, when *Rom.* 4. 13, 16, 17. He argues in theſe terms, *For the Promiſe that he* (*viz.* Abraham) *ſhould be the heir of the* World, *was not to* Abraham, *or to his Seed by the Law, but through the Righteouſneſs of Faith; therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the* Promiſe *might be ſure to*

All the Seed; *not to* that *only which is of the Law, but to that alſo which is of the faith of* Abraham, [clearly implying, the Promiſe would not have been ſure to *all* the Seed, if it had not been *ſo* to *both* Seeds.] *who is the Father of* Us all. But to apply the Text. Either the *Promiſe* made to *Iſaac* (for in *Iſaac* Abrahams *Seed* is called,) was made to him, and ſo the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, *as* he repreſented the Seed of the *Faith* of *Abraham*; or *it* was made to him, and ſo the *Obligation* lay upon him *as* not repreſenting *that* Seed: If you ſay the *Promiſe* was made to him, and ſo the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, as he repreſented the Seed of the Faith of *Abraham*, then it was made to him, and the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, *as* he repreſented the *Spiritual Seed*; for the ſeed of the Faith of *Abraham* is the Spiritual Seed; but if you ſay the Promiſe was made to *Iſaac*, and ſo the Obligation lay upon him *as* in his own Perſon only, or only *as* the Legal either mere Carnal or believing ſeed deſcended from him, then the Promiſe is not ſure to *all* the ſeed, not to the *Seed of the Faith* of *Abraham* under the *Goſpel*, becauſe this ſeed then, is not Entituled to it *as* ſeed, for it is in *Iſaac* that *Abrahams* ſeed is called, according to *Gen.* 21. and

ſo

ſo the *Apoſtle* (who makes good their Title *as Abrahams* ſeed, and conſequently as they were in *Iſaac*,) was really out of the right, if *you* be in it.

But I have mentioned a *Conceſſion* of yours in a *Former Letter*, and make uſe of it; leaſt therefore you either ſhould forget it, or ſhould by ſome Evaſion which I cannot think of *Elevate* the force of it, and ſo Create me new trouble hereafter, I will cite the paſſage now, but with this precaution, that I do not ſay you underſtand *preciſely* the ſame perſons as I do, to be intended in the 8th. and 9th. and 10th. verſes, but I ſay you grant *there*, and there make much of it, that the *ſame* perſons or ſubjects (be they what they will,) are to be underſtood as meant in the 9th. and 10th, verſes, which are ſo in the 8th. For ſay you ["God having *promiſed* in the 8th. "verſe to give unto *Abraham*, and to his "*Seed* after him the Land wherein he was "then a ſtranger, even all the Land of "*Canaan* for an Everlaſting Poſſeſſion, and "to be their God. In the very next verſe "he is pleaſed to proceed to declare the "*Incumbence* now to be faſtened on *them* upon the *forementioned account*, &c.] So that *you* grant, the *ſame* perſons are under the *Incumbence* and *Obligation* that are un-

der the *Promiſe*, and are ſo in the ſame reſpect, as being in the Obligation upon account of their being in the Promiſe, and the *Apoſtle* is plain, that the *Promiſe* is to *Abraham* and to *all* his Seed, the Seed which is of the Faith of *Abraham*, or the believing *Gentile*, as well as the Seed which is of the Law, or the Natural *Jew*; And I ſhould think the Apoſtles Authority as good as any. And now, 'tis a proper time to anſwer your *queſtion*, and to tell what Authors I follow, why, you ſee, they are Scriptural ones, ſuch as *Paul* &c. the ſame Authors the firſt Reformers *followed*, and the ſame your Predeceſſors *pretended* to follow.

This is the proof I have that *Iſaac* in the Spirit, or *Iſaac as* he Repreſented Chriſt Myſtical, and *ſo* the believing *Gentiles*, is meant in *Gen.* 17. 9. Againſt which, you offer me again *what* in effect, I have baffled over and over. But becauſe it may afford me a *riſe* of more expreſs declaring what I have ſaid formerly, and alſo of adding ſomething which I had not ſuch occaſion to produce before, I ſhall conſider it again.

You ſay then, "that *Iſaac* in the Spirit, "or the believing *Gentiles* cannot be un-"derſtood by the Seed in the 9th. verſe,

"becauſe

" because the Seed there mentioned, is *ex-*
" *pressly* commanded in the 10th. to be Cir-
" cumcised.] Which (say I) is, In effect, to say it is so, because it is so. To conceive the *force* of which Reply, as well as of your Reason, I must have leave to enter into the *State* of Matters, as at present they do stand between us.

The 9th. verse is the parting point. You argue that the Seed in the 9th. verse, [*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore Thou and thy Seed*] cannot be understood of the Spiritual Seed, [believing *Gentiles*,] because that Seed which is in the 9th. verse, is (say you) expressly commanded in the 10th. to be *Circumcised*; and that *that* is the meaning of *keeping the Covenant* in verse the 9th. I on the contrary, argue that the *Obligation* in the 9th. verse, cannot be understood *Determinately*, and particularly of *Circumcision*, because the subject of *it* is the same Seed to whom the Promise is made; namely, *All* the Seed, and Circumcision was not competent to *all*; and that therefore [*ye*] in the 10th. verse, on which the Obligation to be Circumcised is laid, cannot possibly include the *Seed* as in the 9th. verse, this is the true *State*.

For you therefore to take for granted that the Seed mentioned in the 9th. verse,

is included in [*ye*] in the 10th. is a thing ſo mean and pitiful, that in *Engliſh*, it is called *Begging*, Begging the queſtion, for this is one of the Points *in queſtion* between us: But to affirm that the Seed in the 9th. verſe, is expreſly commanded in the 10th. to be Circumciſed, is *worſe*, for in expreſs terms, it is not [this is the Covenant which thou and thy *Seed* ſhall keep] but [this is the Covenant which *ye* ſhall keep,] and what is meant by [ye] whether *Abraham* and the *Seed* mentioned before in verſe the 9th. or only He and *Iſhmael*, and the other perſons then preſent at the Inſtitution of Circumciſion, which God ſhould ſpeak to, is the queſtion.

I do confeſs, the *Grammar* of the Text would have carried it well enough for your ſence, and it would have run ſmoothly, [*Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed; This is the Covenant which* ye *ſhall keep*] if it had not pleaſed God to add [*between* me *and* you, *and* thy Seed *after thee:*] But yet even *then* I could not eaſily have underſtood how *Any* of the Seed could be excuſed from Circumciſion. But *that* then, had been the only difficulty; but *now* there is *another*, and no ſmall one; for God himſelf *Diſtinguiſhing* in the 10th. verſe, between *you* and thy *Seed* after thee,

[*This*

[*This is the Covenant which* you *ſhall keep between* me *and* you, *and thy* Seed *after* thee;] and *thy Seed after thee* in the 10th. verſe, being in all reſpects the ſame expreſſion, without any the leaſt alteration, with that in the 9th, and that alſo in one continued Speech, and conſequently ſignifying the ſame *ſubjects* in all reſpects, what is plainer then that this *diſtinction* muſt be a *Key* to the whole Text, and that to open the Text in any wayes without *this*, will not be to unlock, but force it.

And this *Diſtinction* indeed is that which pinches and amazes you, and makes you ſo confuſed that you ſcarce know what you ſay, for in *one* place you ſay it reſolutely, "*that there is no ſuch Diſtinction but of my* "*making*; but in *another*, with greater modeſty, you ſay, *that as appears to you, God doth not diſtinguiſh the* [ye] *from the Seed in the beginning of the* 10th. *verſe, except as one was preſent, the other* Future] And what is all this? but that he doth diſtinguiſh and that he doth not, and that he doth not diſtinguiſh except as he doth diſtinguiſh, and that as much as can be diſtinguiſhed, (*viz.*) as one from many, and preſent perſons from future, ah! Dear Sir you ſeem a little *unſettled*; and therefore it is time to give over.

But

But happily, I go too fast, and you will tell me that as you said, that no such distinction is but of my making, so you gave a reason for saying it, (*viz.*) That *the termes of every distinction must be opposite, else it is no distinction*;] And there is *Logick* for me: And sweet Sir for this I thank you [that there is no distinction but where opposition,] It is new, a new *Light* in Logick; Former Logicians (poor dark men, they) never saw it, one of them, and he no small one neither, *Dully* tells us, that Diversity is either Distinction or Opposition; and not one of them (so blind they be) but would tell, that Disparates are distinct, and are not opposites; And indeed Dear Sir your *Heart*, and *Tongue*, and *Hand*, are things distinct, but (I hope) not *Opposites*; Either other Logicians (all of them) are out of their Element; or you, yet, Good Sir not come into it.

Well, but however you express it, your meaning may be good, *ye, and thy Seed* may be conjoyned in one party in the Obligation, as you say they are, though by the way, to be conjoyned, *they*, in themselves, must be distinct. But what you add, is neither good nor true; (*viz.*) "*That* "*the Seed which I would make a Member* "*of the Distinction, is a self Created term*]

so

ſo you ſay, but mean (I think) a Creature of mine. But I aſſure you 'tis not ſo; I am no Creator; I added not theſe termes [*between me and you, and thy Seed*;] they are the Holy Spirits, and not mine, and ſeem even at firſt ſight, to imply a diſtinction of *parties*, as well as of *perſons*, and to ſound as if the Covenant were *Tripartite*, but yet, as I love not skirmiſhing for words only, call them two parties, or three parties, or four parties if you will, provided you diſtinguiſh between God and *you*, and *thy Seed*, and do not make *you* and *thy Seed* all one *thing*, as well as all one *party*; I aſſure you it ſhall break no ſquares.

But by occaſion of your directing me unto the ſecond and fourth verſes of the 17th. of *Gen.* to prove the Covenant *Bipartite*; give me leave to obſerve to you, (and in the Obſervation to imply an Anſwer,) that *Abraham*, as he is the ſubject in the Promiſes in the whole tranſaction between God and him, doth in diverſe places, undergo a diverſe conſideration, he is conſidered two waves; Firſt, he is conſidered *ſingly* by himſelf, and in his own Perſon, and ſo he is tranſacted with, and Promiſes are made to him, verſes 2. 4, 5, 6. [*I will make my Covenant between me and* thee, *my Covenant is with* thee; *Thy Name ſhall be*

no

no more Abram, but Abraham, I will make thee *many Nations.*] In all these a Covenant is made with *Abraham*, as he is considered singly, and in his own Person; without any mention of his Seed, or any concernment of them. But then secondly, he is considered *jointly*, as concerned with his Seed, and so, he is transacted with, and promises are made and ratified to him in the 7th. and 8th. verses; [*and I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and* thy Seed *after thee*, &c. *and I will give unto thee, and to thy* Seed *after thee, the Land in which thou art a Stranger*] Now the Covenant as made with *Abraham* singly, is *Bipartite*; but as made with *Abraham as* he is joyned with his Seed, it is *Tripartite*; for there a *new party*, or (which is as much as I said I would contend for, or be understood to mean) a new, another Person is taken in. Again, as *Abraham* had undergone a double consideration in the Covenant or Promise, and was transacted with both *singly* in his own Person, and also *jointly* with his Seed; So answerably, in the general Obligation verse the 9th, he is expresly and in terms made the subject of it, both *singly* by himself, and also as *joyned* with the Seed; [*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore,*] there he is singly; [*Thou*

and

and thy Seed *after thee in their Generations*,] there he is joyned: So exact it pleases God to be, even in termes, in adjusting of the subjects in the *Promise* and *Obligation*, and in making of them Answering; All to shew, that those that are included in the *one*, are equally implyed in the *other*, and that by the same account and consideration, by which any lay their claim to the *former*, by the very same consideration, and on the same account they come under the tyes of the *Latter*. On the whole, it is not so absurd if duly weighed, to say (which yet I do not peremptorily say) that in that part of the Covenant in which *Abraham* is joyned with the Seed, *he* should *stand* for his *natural posterity*, as there the Seed *doth* for *Christ* Mystical: And so much the Text you Cite, namely, *Gen.* 9. 9, 11, 12. Implyes, (*viz.*) that the Parents represent and stand for their Children; though in other Respects, that Text is no wayes Parallel to this, *Gen.* 17. 10. nor serves your purpose; For there it is [*between me and you, and your Seed*] but here [*between me and* you, *and* thy *Seed*, *not your Seed*,] and you have told me, that on every point of the Law, Mountains of sence do hang.

I have proved the Distinction [between God and you, and thy Seed] to be Real;

and

and in prospect that I might be able to do so, you have provided me an Explication; which is, "that when God saith, [*This* "*is my Covenant which* ye *shall keep between* "*me and* you] in your Opinion, it can be "understood no otherwise then thus, [*be-* "*tween me and* you] that is, between me "and thou *Abraham*, together with thy "Son *Ishmael*, and the *rest* of the Family "now *present* with thee; And not only be- "tween me and you *now present*, but be- "tween me and *you*, and *thy Seed* after "thee before expressed.] But oh! sweet Sir recollect a little here, for I fear you do mistake your self; These are the very words of the Paraphrase, the Mizmaze Paraphrase; However, it makes me hope we shall agree at last, your off's and on's, and on's and off's are good signes of it. No say you, stop there; *For thy Seed after thee in the 9th. verse, is included in the first* [ye] *of the 10th. verse,*] But how (say I) can that be, if it be excluded the *second*; from which in the 10th. it is distinguished? But to press you the more, I ask you, doth not in your opinion, [thy Seed in the 9th. verse.] include the Present as well as Future Seed? You tell me it doth, else how came *Ishmael* under the Duty! I ask again, doth not the *first* ye (or you) in

the

the 10th. verſe, in your Opinion include the Seed in the 9th. ? you tell me it doth. I ask further, doth not the ſecond [you] in the 10th. verſe ſignifie the ſame with the firſt [ye or you?] here you muſt be at a ſtand, for if the *firſt* you [or ye] include the Seed Preſent and Future, and the *ſecond* [you] do ſignifie the ſame as the firſt, then the ſecond [*you*] muſt include the Future Seed as well as the Preſent, and ſo the addition to it [of *thy Seed after thee*] muſt be *ſuperfluous*, and where then, will be the Mountains of ſence hanging on that word! But on the other hand, if you ſay the *ſecond* [you] doth ſignifie the preſent Family only, and the *firſt* you [or ye] the Family both Preſent and Future, you make the Scripture unintelligible, and God not only to ſpeak ambiguouſly, but againſt all the Rules of Grammar and common ſpeaking, and againſt good ſence, to make a *Pronoune Demonſtrative* not to Demonſtrate, and though ſtanding in Coherence and Relation, yet not to Cohere, not to Relate. *This is my Covenant which* you [or ye] *ſhall keep between me and* you; What you I pray now but the Firſt? *You* that are to keep the Covenant, are to keep it between me and *you*. To take the *firſt* you [or ye] for ſome Perſons, and the *ſecond* for others,

is non-ſenſical: Both ſtanding plainly for the ſame, and therefore if [between me and *you*] be as you ſay, [between me and *thee Abraham*, and *Iſhmael*, and the *reſt* of the Family here preſent] the firſt you [or ye] muſt be underſtood of *them* too: and that's the whole of the Paraphraſe.

However, I am glad you have found the *preſent Family* ſpoken to any where in the Text, for that granted, I think my ſence above exception, and that it will lye even with all that goes before, and all that followes after; Taking [*thy Seed after thee*] for *Iſaac* in the Letter and Spirit in all the verſes: *I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and* thy Seed; *I will give to thee and* thy Seed; *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and* thy Seed. *This is the Covenant which* you *ſhall keep* [ſpeaking to the preſent Family, *Abraham* being there] *between me and* you, *and thy Seed* after thee, [caſting his Eye on *Abraham*.]

Before I leave this point, I am to mind you of a bold Abuſe you put upon me, when you intimate as my Opinion, that Baptiſm is *immediately* intended in the 9th. verſe, whereas (you know) I have told you ten times over, that I underſtand the keeping of the Covenant there *generally*, for keep-

keeping of it in the *ſign* of it (whatever the ſign at any time be,) and not *particularly* and *determinately*, for keeping of it immediately either in Circumciſion, or in Baptiſm; Indeed in that moment, when the general Obligation was impoſed of keeping the ſign, neither Baptiſm nor Circumciſion in *particular was* yet Inſtituted; Though Circumciſion was, in the very next Moment. I confeſs, had the keeping of the Covenant in the ſign of it, which is the duty injoyned in the 9th. verſe, been a keeping of it *particularly* and Determinately, in either Baptiſm or Circumciſion; Then (as you obje&,) either *Abraham* muſt have been *Baptized*, if Baptiſm had been intended particularly; or elſe, *Iſaac* in the Spirit [the believing *Gentiles*, the true Spiritual Seed] muſt have been *Circumciſed*, if Circumciſion had immediately and particularly been meant: But that *term* being underſtood but *generally* and indeterminately; *Abraham* and his Seed are only obliged *by it* to keep the Covenant in *ſome* ſign; In that ſign *Reſpectively*, which ſhould be the ſign of their Reſpective times; And thus *Abraham* did keep it in Circumciſion, the ſign in his time; And ſo did *Iſaac* in the Letter, as the Natural Off-ſpring of *Abraham*, in the ſign that then was; But Spiritual *I-*

Isaac (or the believing *Gentiles*) could not keep it in the sign *then*; They not having being *then*, and so no particular sign was ordained for them *then*; but when ever they should be, They (being the Seed of *Abraham*) are tyed by the Obligation [verse the 9th] to keep the Covenant in the sign of it, *viz.* in that sign which then should be (the sign,) when they became Seed.

And on this occasion it may not be omitted to be noted, that though *Isaac* in his own person, as a Natural Descendant of *Abraham*, was Circumcised, as in that Capacity he ought to be; yet (being to sustain the Person of *Abrahams* Spiritual Seed, and in the Mystery to stand for and be a Type of that Seed, which is of the faith of *Abraham*) he was not as *Ishmael* (who was the Type and Figure of the Seed which was of the Law,) *present* at the Institution of the Ordinance of Circumcision, designed to be the sign of the Legal Seed; *Ishmael* was one of those that God did speak to [*every Man-Child among you shall be Circumcised*] but *Isaac* was not there; He was unborn: This *Timing* of the Institution should be of some significancy.

To this I add, for greater Illumination of the Holy Mystery, that even the *calling*

of

of the Natural Seed in Isaac, and the appropriating of the Promises in the Letter, to the Seed of *Abraham* as it did derive by *Isaac*, was Mystical; And shewed, that as all the Promises of God are yea, and Amen in *Christ*, so that Christians and true Believers are in *him*, the *true* Inheritors of the Promise, in the Spiritual meaning of it, and indeed, why else, should the Seed be called in *Isaac*, *Gen.* 21. 12. were it not for a Mystery? For if by Seed, *there* is meant (as in the Letter it is) only the *Carnal Seed*, one would think, it should have been *more proper* to have called *it* in *Ishmael*, the Type and Figure of *that* Seed, than in *Isaac* who represented *Another*, and *so* indeed it would have been, if *but* the Carnal Seed had been called in *Isaac*, without any Relation, any Aspect at all unto the Spiritual. Here also it may not be improper to observe the difference in the several Blessings which it pleased God to confer on *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, *Gen.* 17. 19, 20, 21. no mention in the least of any *Seed* in the *Blessing* of *Ishmael*, though in the fruitfulness is promised to him, there be an implication of Children, but in *that* of *Isaac*, there is mention of *Seed*; The Covenant is Established with him, and with his Seed after him: As if the term *Seed* was Mystical

and Spiritual, and did not only signifie Natural Children, but Spiritual also. Judge now, whether *Isaac* be not, both in the Promise, and in the Obligation too, to be considered as he represents the believing *Gentiles*, the true Spiritual Seed.

All that I have offered hitherto, is on occasion of your *first Reason* to evince, that *Isaac* in the Spirit, or *Isaac* as he represented the Spiritual Seed, is not intended in the general Obligation verse the 9th. and *that* was taken from *Isaac* himself: I will now proceed to the *second*, (for so I do reduce to order what you in some confusion have written without any,) and this is from *Ishmael*; For say you, "it was not under that "precise notion that the present Obligati-"on verse the 9th. was fastned on him, "(viz. *Isaac*) there being nothing of this "nature mentioned throughout the whole "Context, but rather as he was Descend-"ed from *Abraham* according to the Flesh, "for otherwise *Ishmael* had been excluded "from the Duty there mentioned, who "could pretend nothing of any Spiritual "Relation to *Abraham*, as *Isaac* did, and "yet it cannot be denyed but *Ishmael* was "included therein, as well as *Isaac*."

But this requires little Answer, as running altogether upon Mistakes; For *Isaac*

in the Letter is meant indeed, but *Isaac in the Spirit* principally. Again, there is as little in the whole Con-Text mentioned of *Christ*, (and yet I hope you will not exclude him too from being meant,) as there is of the Obligations being fastned on *Isaac*, *as* he represented the Spiritual Seed. And as for *Ishmael*, it was *Abrahams Duty* to Circumcise him, and he Circumcised him as he did his Slaves, under the Notion of his *own*, his Property, and not precisely as his *Seed*. And if *Ishmael* himself was under any Obligation to Circumcise his (as I conceive he was,) it was as he was comprehended in the *you*, to whom expresly the command of Circumcision was given, he was also obliged in *Abraham*. * But that he was obliged to do it, *as* being *Abrahams Seed*, by vertue of the general injunction, *Gen.* 17. 9. I positively deny. For *that* Seed only, and no other is obliged by vertue of the general injunction there, which is the Object of the Promise before; That Seed only which is in the Promise in verse the 8th. is the Seed put under the duty in verse the 9th. now *Ishmael* was farr enough from being the Object of the Promise in verse the 8th. so far, that He is expresly and in Termes excluded from it; The Scripture not only saying, *In* Isaac

ſhall thy Seed be called, but alſo, *caſt out the Bond Woman and her Son, for the Son of this Bond Woman ſhall not be Heir with my Son, with Iſaac*, Gen. 21. 10. And now bethink alſo, how can the Spiritual Seed as well as the Carnal in your ſence, that is, *Iſaac* as well as *Iſhmael* be in the Promiſe and the Obligation too, as you ſay they be, if *Iſhmael* were not *Heir* of the Promiſe, nor at all in it.

And here I had diſmiſſed this point, but that it comes into my mind, that againſt *Abrahams* ſtanding (* with *Iſhmael* &c.) in the buſineſs of Circumciſion for his Natural Poſterity, (which yet is uſual in the Scriptures for the Fathers to do, and is ſo (as I noted before) in the very Covenant of *Noah* which you mentioned;) You object, *How then did he receive Circumciſion as a ſeal of the Righteouſneſs by Faith.*] To which I anſwer very well; for the ſign of Circumciſion is Annexed to the Covenant and Promiſe, as now Eſtabliſhed; *I will* Eſtabliſh *my Covenant*, &c. The *Promiſe* of Canaan, it *was made* to *Abraham*, and to his Seed before, *Gen.* 15. 7, 8. &c. 18. but *now* is *Ratified* and Confirmed, and in token of its being *ſo*, a ſign is put to it; So that the ſigning of the Covenant with Circumciſion, being in token of its rati-

ratification, was a ſealing, (* the ſign was a ſeal) a Confirming of the Righteouſneſs by faith; that is, of the Reward of Righteouſneſs, or of that Inheritance which God, for *Abrahams* believing of his Promiſe to him, (ſo improbable, ſo unlikely, and in Nature ſo impoſſible, (*viz.*) that he ſhould have Seed as the Stars) conferred upon *him*: For ſo it muſt be underſtood, as will appear moſt evidently from a view of the whole paſſage, *Gen.* 15. 5, 6, 7. for *there*, we have a Relation; *Firſt*, of Gods *Promiſe* to *Abraham*, which was of Seed as Stars, in the 5th verſe; And then *Secondly*, of *Abrahams belief*, and Faith in that improbable Promiſe, in the beginning of the 6th. verſe, *Abraham* believed the *Lord*; And *Thirdly*, of the *Reward* the Lord gave him for that his great Faith; and this, *Firſt*, more *generally*, in the latter part of the 6th. verſe, and he accounted *it unto him* for Righteouſneſs; That is, the Lord Rewarded him, for ſo, in the Language of the Holy Scriptures, to account for Righteouſneſs is; It is graciouſly to give a Perſon the Reward of Righteouſneſs, for a thing which in it ſelf, is not compleat Righteouſneſs; And then *Secondly*, more *Particularly*, how he Rewarded him, and that is verſe the 7th. by giving him the

Promise of the Land of *Canaan*. And indeed *our* Faith is accounted unto us for Righteousness, as *Abraham* was to Him; We have by Divine Grace, the Heavenly Inheritance for believing in Christ, as He the Promise of the Temporal, * (though not that only) for Believing *Jehovah*. And now, why might not all this be, and yet *Abraham* * in the business of Circumcision represent his own Posterity; (* though I do not positively say he did;) and the rather, because the Reward (* in the Letter) was *Canaan*, which now was Sealed and Confirmed to him in the sign of Circumcision, put to the ratification of that Covenant and Promise, in which God had before conveighed, and passed it.

Thus I have proved *Isaac* as he represented Christ Mystical, or the Spiritual Seed, to be intended in the Obligation, verse the 9th. but it seems I might have saved so much Ink and Paper, for at last you tell me plainly, "that *Abraham* and all *his*, "Present or Future, Carnal or Spiritual, "were concerned in the *Obligation* as well "as in the Promise, some way or other. [That is well,] in the Promises Temporal, the Carnal Seed were concerned, in the "Blessings Temporal and Spiritual, the "Believing Seed of *Abraham* were con-

"cerned,

"cerned, and both the one and the other "[*and what are they*, (ſay I) *but the Natu-*"*ral and Believing Seed of Abraham*,] "were alſo concerned in the Obligation, "Verſe the 9th. [*ſo far you are juſt*, I, "*but you muſt not be miſtaken*, *you add*,] "(*i. e.*) to be Circumciſed, for *Iſaac*, and "all the believing *Jews* were Circumciſed "as well as *Iſhmael*.] And what, Dear Sir, was *Iſaac* and the believing *Jews*, the only believing Seed of *Abraham*? And doth *Iſaac* ſtand but for believing *Jews*, and not for believing *Gentiles*? I pray, reconcile your ſelf unto the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 3. 14, 15, 16. *&c.* and 4. 22. *&c.* to 31. and *Rom.* 4. 13, 16. And remember, I have clearly proved, in the Correct Copy of my firſt Letter, that *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac* are, the former the Seed under the Law, the latter, Believers under the Goſpel.

"Ay! but what if *Iſaac* ſtand in the "Obligation, verſe the 9th. for the Spirt-"tual Seed, or believing *Gentiles*, what "then? What is this to the Baptiſm of In-"fants,] I anſwer, I refer you for a fur-ther anſwer to the Corrected Copy of my firſt Letter; There you may plainly ſee, what it is to Infants Baptiſm; I repeat it not, becauſe it would be endleſs to go round, and ſay over again the ſame things: A Cir-

cle

cle is infinite; There is *another* word for you to wheer on, but I hope you will not mistake it for [*God*,] as you did the word *Eternal* in my last for [in Eternity,] against common use;

Æterno sed erunt tibi magna Volumina versu. Tibul. l. 2. The like in *Cicero*, and in *Seneca*, &c.

Upon the whole, I hope I have most fully Asserted the Paraphrase I made upon the Text in Controversie; The *Paraphrase* do I say, or dare I mention *that* again! why *that*, "that is, *to you*, the most involved, "tortious, intricate that ever you heard of, "except *Origens* Allegorical and Mystical "Commentaries." And I believe you; but then, how well the Apostle, who is my Author, will escape your censure, I know not, but it is well for him, and for me too, that the Paraphrase is *all* this but *unto you*; The sizes of Humane understanding are very different, and yours is not the Measure and Standard of good sence, or of Judgment; others more unbyassed, and as judicious persons will not think the *worse* of the Paraphrase, nor the *better* of you for your calling it *names*.

Only,

Only, as to the great *adoe* you make upon the diſjunctive Particle [but] inſerted in my Paraphraſe, I muſt tell you, that but a grain of either the Candour of which you make profeſſion, or of true ſoundneſs of Judgment, would have prevented it. For that [but,] I did not add it unto the Text; I never inſiſted on it; I only put it in a *Parentheſis* to ſhew that a Particle (as ſmall as that was) if underſtood and ſupplyed (as the like is done many times in other Scriptures, and muſt be done to make the ſence entire, ſee *Job.* 16. 5.) would have put my ſence of the Text out of queſtion. I but put it in to make you ſenſible of my meaning; which conceived, you might leave it out again, for my ſence is good without it; and the connexive particle [now] would do as well to my purpoſe, and one of them, to make the ſence compleat, muſt be underſtood, if by [you,] you mean reſtrictively, thoſe there preſent only: in the one [you] you do, and therefore muſt in both, the reaſon is the ſame for both, as for one.

Let it be granted (as by you it is) that God doth ſpeak to any in the term [you] as preſent, I may make good my Paraphraſe againſt the World, for the ſuppoſal

ſal of an *Apoſtrophe*, is all that ſeemeth Harſh and Difficult in it; Suppoſe him to mean but them there preſent in the firſt [you;] that is, to mean *that* in the *firſt*, which you your ſelf do grant he means in the *ſecond*, and the buſineſs is ended. But as for your *Paraphraſe*, it is too general and looſe, and off from the Text, and not a Paraphraſe upon it.

What you add in anſwer to my ſeveral queſtions, is but Retailing of what I had *before*, and have again conſidered *now* in groſs; only where you ſay, "that the rea-"ſon why in the 10th. verſe, and after-"ward *&c.* the Holy Ghoſt uſeth a re-"ſtrictive term, ye ſhall keep *&c.* is be-"cauſe it would have been improper to "have *repeated* the word Seed, (according "to the uſual *formes of Speech* generally in "cuſtom among men) it being enough when "*Abraham* and his Seed had been *once* or "*twice* mentioned to ſay [you] as there "was further occaſion to make mention of "them.]

I anſwer, that it is not once or twice, but *four* times, and that is *alwayes* all along [thee and thy Seed] before he came to in-

ſtitute

ſtitute Circumciſion, which was not competent to all the Seed: And why I pray, not Humane *formes of Speech* obſerved before, by the uſing of [you], after once or twice mentioning, inſtead of [thee and thy Seed:]

Again, ſhew me, among all the *formes of Speech* generally in cuſtom among men, one ſuch as *this* is in *your ſence*, where *two* you's, in the ſame Coherence and Relation, ſhall be underſtood diverſely; The *firſt* of them for one ſubject, the *ſecond* for *another*: *This is the Covenant which you ſhall keep between* me *and* you, which *you* ſhall keep, meaning ſome perſons; between me and you, meaning other Perſons. If this be your *Grammar*, it is new to, and all as new as your *Logick*.

In fine, in your ſence it would have run ſmooth, and more according to the *formes of Speech* generally in cuſtom among men, in theſe termes; *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed*; *This is the Covenant which* you *ſhall keep between me and you* [omitting thy Seed after thee.] *every man child among you ſhall be Circumciſed*: But [thy Seed] being put in with the

the *second* [you], and so distinguished from *it*, clearly implies that *it* was not intended to be *Comprehended in* the *first*.

But the *Controversie* must, and shall have end; (and the sooner, because (as you do manage it) it is become a wordy brabling busines; as also, for that you treat me in it but (as *Æsop* did his Masters Guests) with Tongue, Tongue still, nothing but Tongue in several dishes.) And that *it* may have end as fairly as it took beginning, seeing we have joyned Issue, and have made our Arguments; I propose that you elect some (two or three) of your Friends, and at any time, in any House at *Totnes* within a Moneth at your appointment, meet me with the like number of mine, to hear the whole matter, and Judge upon it: Else the World must; You may do with your Papers as you list, I will Publish mine, in vindication of.

Decem. 26. 1682.

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